2024-25

YEARBOOK

SCHWARTZ — LARSSON — EBERLE — BENIERS — BOURDE

SEATTLE KRAKEN

Look at Seattle Through a Muckleshoot Lens

In today's city, we still see our ancestral homeland. Its bustling downtown waterfront holds links to our heritage. The mountains and valleys echo with the ancient beat of our drums.

This is where our ancestors celebrated the return of the salmon. This is where we hunted, gathered, fished, and foraged. This is where we welcomed our neighbors — and still do.

The Muckleshoot Indian Tribe invites you to take a look at the Seattle region through our eyes, and learn about how we continue to protect the legacy and culture of our Duwamish ancestors.

Our Seattle Heritage Runs Deep.
We are Muckleshoot.

MUCKLESHOOT INDIAN TRIBE

LEARN MORE FROM MUCKLESHOOT STORYTELLERS

Learn more about our history and culture directly from Tribal Members at **WeAreMuckleshoot.org/Storytelling**

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SEATTLE KRAKEN

2024-25 OFFICIAL YEARBOOK

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IN MEMORIAM

DAVID BONDERMAN

Owner, Visionary, Father, Grandfather

1942 – 2024

There is no Seattle Kraken nor Climate Pledge Arena without the extraordinary vision of David Bonderman. Our organization mourns his passing at age 82 in mid-December. Along with all of us who call the Pacific Northwest home, we are grateful to a University of Washington grad who convinced the NHL to award our city the league's 32nd franchise and assure the acoustics at Climate Pledge Arena were perfect for both celebratory high decibels after a Jared McCann goal and listening to the likes of the Eagles, Paul McCartney, Bruce Springsteen and hometown favorite, Pearl Jam.

"Bondo," as he was known to friends and colleagues, leaves behind a legacy marked by brilliance at every stage of his illustrious career combined with a relentless quest for knowledge and a passion for music, sports, adventure and conservation. David was a true friend to many and, above all else, a devoted father of five and grandfather of three. His daughter, Samantha Holloway, is now the owner and NHL governor of the Kraken.

The tributes to Mr. Bonderman came from near and far. We honor him by sharing the memories:

Eye on the Kraken

Those in the room still talk about the day "Bondo" literally defined the vision of what the Kraken could be. During a final brand-mark design meeting in 2019, he pondered the "S"- shaped figure projected on screen. Something was missing in his mind. Silent through most of the meeting, he stood up, walked to the screen and calmly suggested adding a red swatch to the logo to represent the sea creature's eye. The rest is a living history.

"For a man that talked as quietly and softly as he did, I never saw anybody command a room quite like he did," said Oak View Group CEO Tim Leiweke, who brought Bonderman to Seattle in 2017 to be the majority owner of the future Kraken. "When he had something to say, everybody in the room stopped and listened."

Big Thinker, Bigger Heart

"I was fortunate to meet David Bonderman a few years ago as he tried to assemble a team to start a hockey franchise in Seattle," said Amazon CEO and Kraken investor Andy Jassy. "It was one of the great pieces of good luck for me ... People probably knew that Bondo was amazingly smart, insightful, big-thinking and high judgment – some of several reasons why he was so successful professionally. But some may not know how creative, thoughtful, warm, witty and team-oriented he was. He touched a lot of lives in Seattle, and all over the world. I learned from him virtually every time we were together."

New Standards

"David Bonderman lived a life that was astounding in its breadth of achievement, unflinching in its commitment to excellence and relentless in its passion for improving lives – particularly in his adopted home state of Washington," NHL Commissioner Gary Bettman said. "An accomplished litigator and businessman, David was determined that his personal success positively impact others through conservation, philanthropy, sports and music.

"A proud alumnus of the University of Washington, in 2018 he brought NHL hockey to the Pacific Northwest, gaining approval from the Board of Governors to establish an expansion franchise in Seattle that would be named the Kraken and begin play in 2021. Adding David to the Board of Governors and the Seattle franchise to the NHL made our League and our game stronger, setting new standards in environmental responsibility, diversity and inclusion."

Mentor to Kraken Leaders

"He was just a terrific man, full of humility and generosity," said GM Ron Francis. "For someone with his stature, it was incredible how he presented himself and treated others. He'll be deeply missed by all of his family and friends and our entire organization."

"History will say it was going to take someone extraordinary to fix an extraordinary Rubik's cube [building a brand-new arena while retaining the landmark roof] for this city and region," said Tod Leiweke, hired by Mr. Bonderman to be Kraken CEO in 2018, long before the team had a name. "And that guy came into my world and then he, along with my brother, had the courage and determination, plus the conviction of what this arena and team could be and what it might host in the future. Bondo was a mentor and important person in my life. I learned to listen harder than I'd ever listened to anyone. I'm going to miss him so much."

We all will. And his legacy will grace our lives for generations to come.

SEATTLE KRAKEN

2024-25 SCHEDULE

PRESENTED BY ALASKA AIRLINES

SEPTEMBER 2024

SUN	MON	TUE	WED	THU	FRI	SAT
1	2	3	4	5	6	7
8	9	10	11	12	13	14
15	16	17	18	19	20	21
22 CGY 7 PM	23	24 VAN 7 PM	25	26	27 VAN 7 PM	28 EDM 6 PM
29	30 CGY 6 PM	1	2	3	4	5

OCTOBER 2024

SUN	MON	TUE	WED	THU	FRI	SAT
29	30	1	2 EDM 7 PM	3	4	5
6	7	8 STL 1:30 PM	9	10	11	12 MIN 5 PM
13 DAL 5 PM	14	15 NSH 5 PM	16	17 PHI 7 PM	18	19 CGY 7 PM
20	21	22 COL 5:30 PM	23	24 WPG 7 PM	25	26 CAR 7 PM
27	28	29 MTL 4 PM	30	31 TOR 4 PM	1	2

NOVEMBER 2024

SUN	MON	TUE	WED	THU	FRI	SAT
27	28	29	30	31	1	2 OTT 4 PM
3 BOS 2 PM	4	5 COL 6 PM	6	7	8 VGK 7 PM	9
10	11	12 CBJ 7 PM	13	14 CHI 7 PM	15	16 NYI 1 PM
17 NYR 6 PM	18	19	20 NSH 7 PM	21	22	23 LAK 1 PM
24	25 ANA 7 PM	26	27 ANA 7 PM	28	29 SJS 12:30 PM	30 SJS 7 PM

DECEMBER 2024

SUN	MON	TUE	WED	THU	FRI	SAT
1	2	3 CAR 4 PM	4	5 NYI 4:30 PM	6 NJD 4 PM	7
8 NYR 10 AM	9	10 FLA 7 PM	11	12 BOS 7 PM	13	14 TBL 7 PM
15	16	17 OTT 7 PM	18	19 CHI 5:30 PM	20	21 VGK 7 PM
22 COL 5 PM	23	24	25	26	27	28 VAN 1 PM
29	30 UTA 5 PM	31	1	2	3	4

JANUARY 2025

SUN	MON	TUE	WED	THU	FRI	SAT
29	30	31	1	2 VAN 7 PM	3	4 EDM 7 PM
5	6 NJD 7 PM	7	8	9 CBJ 4 PM	10	11 BUF 1 PM
12 DET 12 PM	13	14 PIT 4 PM	15	16 WPG 5 PM	17	18 LAK 7 PM
19	20 BUF 1 PM	21	22	23 WSH 7 PM	24	25 PIT 1 PM
26	27 EDM 6:30 PM	28 ANA 7 PM	29	30 SJS 7:30 PM	31	1

FEBRUARY 2025

SUN	MON	TUE	WED	THU	FRI	SAT
26	27	28	29	30	31	1
2 CGY 6 PM	3	4 DET 7 PM	5	6 TOR 7 PM	7	8 CGY 7 PM
9	10	11	12	13	14	15
16	17	18	19	20	21	22 FLA 3 PM
23 TBL 3 PM	24	25 STL 5 PM	26	27	28	1

MARCH 2025

SUN	MON	TUE	WED	THU	FRI	SAT
23	24	25	26	27	28	1 VAN 7 PM
2	3	4 MIN 7 PM	5	6 NSH 6:30 PM	7	8 PHI 9:30 AM
9 WSH 12:30 PM	10	11	12 MTL 7:30 PM	13	14 UTA 7 PM	15
16 WPG 6 PM	17	18 CHI 5:30 PM	19 MIN 6:30 PM	20	21	22 EDM 7 PM
23	24	25 CGY 6 PM	26	27 EDM 7 PM	28	29 DAL 7:30 PM
30	31 DAL 7 PM	1	2	3	4	5

APRIL 2025

SUN	MON	TUE	WED	THU	FRI	SAT
30	31	1	2 VAN 7:30 PM	3	4	5 SJS 7 PM
6	7 LAK 7:30 PM	8 UTA 6 PM	9	10 VGK 7 PM	11	12 STL 7 PM
13	14	15 LAK 7:30 PM	16	17	18	19
20	21	22	23	24	25	26
27	28	29	30	1	2	3

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EXECUTIVES

SAMANTHA HOLLOWAY

CO-OWNER & NHL GOVERNOR

Samantha Holloway is the chairperson of the Seattle Kraken Executive Committee. She is an entrepreneur and generalist investor focused on next generation B2B software and consumer brands. She currently serves as Co-Founder & Managing Partner of Hat Labs, a startup studio based in Denver, CO that develops software products. She also serves as Co-Founder & Managing Partner of 2nd & Fillmore, a boutique private investment company that invests in early-stage companies. Prior to starting Hat Labs and 2nd & Fillmore, Sam was the Co-Founder and Chief Customer Officer of GoSpotCheck, an enterprise software company that was acquired in 2020.

TOD LEIWEKE

CEO

Tod Leiweke is the Chief Executive Officer (CEO) for Seattle Hockey Partners. Leiweke is responsible for building a world-class NHL expansion team. He is also responsible for the redevelopment of the Arena at Seattle Center. This $1.6B enterprise has been transformative to Seattle Center and is the largest private investment in the history of sports in Seattle. Prior to being appointed CEO in April 2018, Tod served as the NFL's Chief Operating Officer from 2015-2018; CEO of Tampa Bay Lightning from 2010-2015; CEO of Seattle Seahawks/Sounders from 2002-2010; President of Minnesota Wild from 1997-2002; Executive Director of The First Tee from 1994-1997; and Golden State Warriors from 1987-1994.

VICTOR DE BONIS

PRESIDENT & ALTERNATE NHL GOVERNOR

Victor de Bonis is the President of the Seattle Kraken and NHL Alternate Governor. He has been at the forefront of establishing the Seattle Kraken as the NHL's 32nd franchise and has led the strategic operations across the organization, including the Kraken Community Iceplex (KCI), and supported the development of both Climate Pledge Arena and KCI. Prior to joining the Kraken as Chief Operating Officer in October of 2018, de Bonis worked for the Vancouver Canucks, serving as the Chief Operating Officer (COO) from July 2006 to May 2016, and from September 2009 to May 2017 he also held the title of NHL Alternate Governor.

ROB LAMPMAN

SENIOR VICE PRESIDENT & CHIEF OPERATING OFFICER

As Chief Operating Officer, Rob Lampman oversees Seattle Kraken business operations and, from day one, the three-rink Kraken Community Iceplex, which hosts thousands of youth and adult hockey players year-round, plus a vibrant figure skating community, public skates and Learn-to-Skate and Learn-to-Play-Hockey programs. He has worked in the sports and entertainment industry for 25-plus years, including stellar work to grow the game of soccer/football in North America and globally. He previously served as Head of FIFA World Cup Operations and later Business Development for FIFA in Zurich before founding and operating Eiger Marketing Group.

LANCE LOPES

EXECUTIVE VICE PRESIDENT & GENERAL COUNSEL

Lance Lopes has been with the enterprise since December of 2016. After assisting on securing the right to build a new arena at Seattle Center, he became the first employee of the new NHL hockey franchise. In addition to his legal responsibilities, he led the effort to build the training facility for the team. He is now focused on development projects. He previously served as Senior Associate Athletic Director for the University of Washington, Executive Vice President and General Counsel for the Seattle Seahawks and Vice President and General Counsel of the Green Bay Packers.

JEFF WEBSTER

SENIOR VICE PRESIDENT & CHIEF COMMERCIAL OFFICER

Jeff Webster serves as Chief Commercial Officer overseeing partnership sales and marketing, media partnerships, corporate development, and premium events for the Seattle Kraken and Climate Pledge Arena within OVG's Global Partnerships division. Jeff's prior role at AEG focused on revenue generation for some of the most iconic properties in sports and entertainment including the Staples Center, Los Angeles Kings, Los Angeles Clippers, and Los Angeles Lakers. Overall, his career experience includes $1B+ worth of deals spanning the NFL, NHL, NBA, MLS and motorsports. Jeff is originally from Seattle and is proud to have taken part in launching a world-class enterprise in his hometown.

BILL CHAPIN

SENIOR VICE PRESIDENT, SALES & SERVICE

Bill Chapin leads the ticket sales, premium hospitality and service team for both the Seattle Kraken and Climate Pledge Arena. Prior to joining the Seattle Kraken, he was the SVP of Business Operations at the Kansas City Chiefs. Over his career, he has held leadership roles in five different sports leagues (NHL, NFL, MLB, MLS & NBA) including time with the Seattle Seahawks, Los Angeles Kings, and LA Clippers, and Staples Center. He sits on the Board of Directors for Seattle Aquarium.

KENDALL TYSON

SENIOR VICE PRESIDENT, FINANCE & BUSINESS INTELLIGENCE

Kendall Tyson is responsible for overseeing the financial affairs, strategic planning, and data management of the Kraken and its affiliates. She brings financial and operational cross-industry expertise from her previous roles at Accenture, Topgolf and the LPGA. Kendall holds an MBA from Yale School of Management and bachelor's degrees from Emory University and Georgia Institute of Technology.

EXECUTIVES

KATIE TOWNSEND

SENIOR VICE PRESIDENT & CHIEF COMMUNICATIONS OFFICER

Katie Townsend leads enterprise communications, strategic storytelling and crisis communications. Since joining the organization in 2019, she has guided the team through pivotal moments such as arena construction, team naming, and launching the team. Her efforts help drive organizational success through compelling narratives and reputation management. She previously worked for WE Communications with clients including Microsoft, The Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation and Volvo, following a successful career with the BBC as a senior news and sport producer. She has worked at two Olympic Games, the Cricket World Cup and with a number of Premier League soccer teams.

ALI DANIELS

SENIOR VICE PRESIDENT, MARKETING

Ali Daniels joined the Kraken in 2024 as senior vice president leading marketing efforts and leads the marketing, brand and game presentation teams, focusing on cohesive brand expression and strategic direction. Previously, as chief marketing officer for Visit Seattle, she developed the city's brand identity through compelling storytelling and innovative outreach to residents and visitors alike, establishing the city as a must-visit destination. Ali's expertise lies in integrating strategic insight with creative execution, ensuring that every initiative resonates with audiences. She began her career with the NBA Seattle Supersonics.

CHRIS BRUMWELL

SENIOR VICE PRESIDENT, BROADCAST & MEDIA RELATIONS

Chris Brumwell oversees broadcast and the Kraken Hockey Network (KHN) which debuted this season with games cast on KING, KONG and Prime Video. Chris also leads the team's communications and media relations strategies. He has worked in the sports and entertainment industry for more than 25 years. He previously served as Vice President, Communications, Community and Social Impact for Canucks Sports and Entertainment. He has held leadership roles with the Organizing Committee for the Vancouver 2010 Winter Olympics and Paralympic Winter Games (VANOC), plus an executive role with lululemon athletica. He began his career with the NBA Vancouver Grizzlies.

MARI HORITA

SENIOR VICE PRESIDENT, SOCIAL IMPACT & CIVIC AFFAIRS

Mari Horita is executive director of One Roof Foundation, the joint philanthropic arm of the Seattle Kraken and Climate Pledge Arena. In addition, she leads the organization's social impact, philanthropic, DEI and civic affairs work. She has decades of experience working across public, private, and nonprofit sectors to advance positive social change. Prior to joining the Kraken, Mari was President and CEO of ArtsFund, where she led the organization's strategic transition to better represent and serve the evolving population and arts community in the Puget Sound region. Mari began her professional career as a lawyer at Bogle & Gates, and later at Dorsey & Whitney and K&L Gates.

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EXECUTIVES

TODD HUMPHREY

SENIOR VICE PRESIDENT, DIGITAL INNOVATION & FAN EXPERIENCE

Todd Humphrey leads the teams responsible for the Kraken mobile app, Kraken team technology, retail/merchandise operations and delivering innovative fan experience partnerships. He joined the Kraken in 2019 and brings more than 20 years' experience building technology companies across multiple industries. He serves as the Kraken representative on the Seattle Sports Commission. Todd is a former professional hockey player and in the early days of the franchise served as a regular speaker to local groups to represent NHL Seattle/later the Kraken, providing his indelible love for the sport of hockey.

ROB JOHNSON

SENIOR VICE PRESIDENT, TRANSPORTATION & SUSTAINABILITY

Rob Johnson manages sustainability and transportation for the Seattle Kraken and Climate Pledge Arena. Rob led the team that secured the arena's Leadership in Energy & Environmental Design (LEED) Silver certification and the International Living Future Institute's Zero Carbon Certifications, plus eliminated front-of-house single use plastics, achieved a functionally zero-waste season and subsidized transit passes for all publicly ticketed events. After a career as a transit advocate, Rob was elected to be the first councilmember from Seattle's Council District #4, a position he held from 2015 to 2019.

KATY SEMTNER

SENIOR VICE PRESIDENT, PEOPLE & CULTURE

Katy Semtner leads all strategic human resources initiatives for the Seattle Kraken, including talent acquisition, compensation, benefits and employee engagement. Drawing on more than 25 years of experience in human resources leadership across the sports and hospitality industries, Katy has a proven track record of building people-first cultures. Before joining the Kraken, she served as Vice President of Human Resources for the Oklahoma City Thunder and Director of Human Resources for the NBA Seattle Sonics and WNBA Seattle Storm. Her passion for creating a thriving and inclusive work environment continues to drive the Kraken's culture of excellence and innovation.

HEWAN TESHOME

SENIOR VICE PRESIDENT & GENERAL COUNSEL

Hewan Teshome oversees commercial legal affairs, including policy matters, labor and employment and risk management, for the Seattle Kraken, Climate Pledge Arena and the One Roof Foundation. She joined from a vice president and general counsel role for VICIS, a local sports technology company, and started her career as a corporate lawyer advising media and sports companies in New York. Hewan is proudly Seattle-born and raised. She holds a JD from Stanford Law School and BA from New York University.

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HOCKEY OPERATIONS

RON FRANCIS

GENERAL MANAGER

Last June, Francis and the Kraken amateur scouting staff made eight selections in the 2024 NHL Draft, including the No. 8 overall pick Berkly Catton, adding to an already elite NHL prospect pool in just four years. On the first day of NHL free agency, he signed this season's standouts, defenseman Brandon Montour and center Chandler Stephenson. Later in the summer, the Seattle GM extended the contracts of D-man Adam Larsson and winger Eeli Tolvanen. After a first-ballot Hall of Fame playing career, Ron worked in player development, scouting, coaching and operations over his 12 years with the Carolina Hurricanes. In 2014, Francis was named GM. While at Carolina, he drafted Carolina superstar Sebastian Aho and elite NHL scorer Martin Necas among many others with NHL careers, plus extended standout defenseman Jacob Slavin to a team-friendly contract. He was named first GM in Seattle franchise history July 18, 2019.

Fun Facts: Second all-time in NHL assists behind Wayne Gretzky, including 110 assists on goals by the legendary Jaromir Jagr. Fifth all-time in scoring (549 G, 1,249 A – averaging more than a point per game) and fifth all-time games played (1,731). Scored 44 points in 45 playoff games during back-to-back Stanley Cup wins (1991, 1992) with Pittsburgh. First player to win Lady Byng and Selke in same season (1995). Led Carolina to surprise appearance in 2002 Cup Final in his 21st season. King Clancy Trophy and NHL Foundation Player Award winner (2002).

RICKY OLCZYK

VP & ASSISTANT GENERAL MANAGER

Olczyk enters his fourth season in the VP and Assistant General Manager role with the Kraken and serves as the Kraken's lead expert on managing the salary cap and NHL collective bargaining agreement. Previously, Olczyk was Assistant GM to Ron Francis for four years in Carolina, where he played an integral role in transforming the player development system to become a top-third team across the NHL. He was a driving force in founding Oklahoma City's AHL franchise as Assistant GM for the Edmonton Oilers (seven seasons). He was a key member of the management team for Team Europe's 2016 World Cup, which won silver.

Fun Facts: Pronounced "ohl-check." Played defense four seasons Brown University NCAA D-I team, captain senior year. Captained USA Under-17 team to a silver on team with NHL Jeremy Roenick and Tony Amonte. Earned Cornell Law degree, worked as Associate Counsel for NHL Players' Association. Served as full-time scout for Toronto (2018-19). Competitive trail runner and dedicated vegan. Brother Eddie Olczyk is a Kraken broadcaster. Wrote Honors Thesis in Philosophy: "Life is Essentially Competition."

JASON BOTTERILL

ASSISTANT GENERAL MANAGER

Prior to joining the Kraken for their inaugural season, Botterill was General Manager of the Buffalo Sabres from 2017-20, after spending a decade working for the Pittsburgh Penguins front office, helping construct a Penguins roster that would ultimately win three Stanley Cups (2009, 2016, 2017). He was part of the three-manager leadership team with Kraken GM Ron Francis for the 2019 silver-medalist Team Canada at World Championships. The former NHL left wing was selected 20th overall in the 1994 NHL Draft as a freshman at the University of Michigan (notched 104 goals and 82 assists for 186 points in 150 NCAA games).

Fun Facts: Born in Edmonton but raised in Winnipeg. Only Canadian to win three straight gold medals at World Junior Championship. But high bar for bragging rights in his family: Sister Jennifer won three straight Olympic gold medals (2010, 2006, 2002) and one silver (1998 as youngest player) for Canada's national women's team. His mom was an Olympic speed skater for Canada in the 1964 and 1968 Games. His father is a renowned sports psychologist who has worked with several NHL teams and Canadian Olympians.

ALEXANDRA MANDRYCKY

ASSISTANT GENERAL MANAGER

Appointed Assistant General Manager in September 2022, Mandrycky was the first Kraken hockey operations hire, compiling an analysis of each GM finalist's record, including her now-boss Ron Francis. She oversees the Research & Development team as well as Amateur Scouting for the Kraken. Previously, Mandrycky worked for four seasons with the Minnesota Wild as a hockey operations analyst. The Wild hired her and Carnegie Mellon professor Andrew C. Thomas, co-founders of War-on-Ice.com.

Fun Facts: Named No. 4 in Sportsnet's 2021 ranking of "25 Most Powerful Women in Hockey" and No. 4 in The Athletic's 2020 ranking of "Hockey's 40 under 40." The Atlanta native earned B.S. in industrial engineering from Georgia Tech. As Wild analyst, she regularly "commuted" between Minneapolis and Seattle, where her husband was completing his doctorate in bioengineering at U of Washington.

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HOCKEY OPERATIONS

RESEARCH AND DEVELOPMENT

NAMITA NANDAKUMAR
Manager, Hockey Analytics

DANI CHU
Senior Quantitative Analyst

FIONA MCKENNA
Data Engineer

TIM TAYLOR
Developer

CONNOR FRANCIS
Research & Development Specialist

PLAYER DEVELOPMENT

JEFF TAMBELLINI
Director of Player Development

CORY MURPHY
Player Development Consultant

FRANS NIELSEN
Player Development Consultant

JUSTIN RAI
Player Development Consultant

KATELYN PARKER
Player Development Consultant

SUPPORT STAFF

DAVE TIPPETT
Coaching Staff Consultant

BRENNAN BAXANDALL
Director, Team Services

MIKE FRANCIS
Hockey Operations Manager

BROOKE COYLE
Executive Assistant to the General Manager

MOLLI PUTLAK
Hockey Operations - Executive Assistant

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WIZARDING WORLD
PORTKEY GAMES

HOCKEY OPERATIONS

STRENGTH AND CONDITIONING

NATE BROOKRESON
Head Strength and Conditioning Coach

GARY ROBERTS
Sports Performance Consultant

JAKE JENSEN
Assistant Strength and Conditioning Coach

ATHLETIC TRAINING

JUSTIN ROGERS
Head Athletic Trainer

COLE HARDING
Assistant Athletic Trainer

PHILLIP VARNEY
Assistant Athletic Trainer

ANNELLE CARSON
Massage Therapist

EQUIPMENT MANAGEMENT STAFF

JEFF CAMELIO
Head Equipment Manager

KRIS STIERWALT
Assistant Equipment Manager

JAMES STUCKY
Assistant Equipment Manager

ANTHONY CAMELIO
Assistant Equipment Manager

SCOUTING STAFF

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Chris Mantegna's dream of being a marine biologist came true at the UW. As a grad student in aquatic and fishery sciences, she studies how pollutants affect our food chain, and she trains undergrads from communities underrepresented in the marine sciences. Through her work, Mantegna hopes to turn the tide on climate change – and change the face of her field.

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DAN BYLSMA

HEAD COACH

About Dan: Bylsma enters his first season with the Kraken after being named the second head coach in franchise history on May 28, 2024. He joins the Kraken after spending the previous two seasons as the head coach of the Coachella Valley Firebirds, Seattle's American Hockey League (AHL) affiliate, helping the Firebirds to reach the Calder Cup Finals in consecutive seasons. Bylsma's coaching career has spanned two decades and includes NHL head coaching stints with the Pittsburgh Penguins (2008-09 to 2013-14) and the Buffalo Sabres (2015-16 to 2016-17). Taking over a Penguins squad with a 27-25-5 record at the midway point of the 2008-09 season, Pittsburgh finished the regular season with an 18-3-4 record with Bylsma behind the bench, only losing one game at home for the remainder of the regular season. Bylsma's squad went on to win the 2009 Stanley Cup, the third in franchise history. In 2010-11, he took home the Jack Adams Award as the NHL's top coach after guiding the Penguins to a 49-25-8 record and second place in the Atlantic division despite forwards Sidney Crosby and Evgeni Malkin each playing fewer than 45 games.

Fun Facts: Amassed 62 points (19 goals, 43 assists) in 429 regular-season NHL games with the Los Angeles Kings and the Mighty Ducks of Anaheim, and stints with several AHL, IHL and ECHL teams. Played four seasons of collegiate hockey at Bowling Green State University and was inducted in the BGSU Sports Hall of Fame in 2015. Nickname is "Disco Dan".

JESSICA CAMPBELL

ASSISTANT COACH

About Jessica: Enters her first year with the Kraken as an assistant coach after spending two seasons on Dan Bylsma's coaching staff in Coachella Valley. Under Campbell's tutelage, the Firebirds led the AHL with 252 goals in 2023-24 and reached the Calder Cup Finals in consecutive seasons. Prior to her tenure with Coachella Valley, Campbell worked as an assistant coach and skills coach for the Nürnberg Ice Tigers of the DEL, the top men's professional league in Germany, during the 2021-22 season. On an international level, Campbell served as an assistant coach for Team Germany at the 2022 IIHF World Championship. With the Kraken, she oversees the forwards with assistant coach Dave Lowry and works on the power play with assistant coach Bob Woods.

Fun Facts: She is the first full-time female assistant coach in NHL history to work behind the bench during the regular season. Played four seasons (2010-11 to 2013-14) of collegiate hockey at Cornell University, captaining the team her senior year (notching 15 goals and 25 assists for 40 points in 33 games) before making her professional debut for the Calgary Inferno. She transitioned into coaching as a high-in-demand skating and skills coach with NHL players and prospects based in her native Kelowna, BC. Represented Canada in international competition in several tournaments, including the IIHF U18 World Junior Championships in 2009 and 2010 and the IIHF World Championship in 2015.

DAVE LOWRY

ASSISTANT COACH

About Dave: Lowry enters his third season with the Kraken as an assistant coach. Prior to joining Seattle's coaching staff in 2022, he served as head coach of the Winnipeg Jets, where he was elevated from assistant coach during the 2021-22 season. Upon his appointment as head coach, the Jets went from a 13-11-5 record to finishing out the season with a 26-22-6 record in the remaining 54 games. Prior to his time in Winnipeg, Lowry spent five seasons as an NHL assistant coach with Calgary and Los Angeles. Lowry began his coaching career with the WHL's Calgary Hitmen for the 2005-06 season, following a 19-year playing career in the NHL. Lowry became a head coach in 2007 when the Hitmen won a division title and made a playoff run. Along with the Hitmen, he held head coaching positions with the Victoria Royals and Brandon Wheat Kings, posting a 303-155-37 record in WHL games. Lowry was drafted by the Vancouver Canucks in the 1983 draft, and through his long career played for the St. Louis Blues, Florida Panthers, San Jose Sharks and Calgary Flames.

Fun Facts: Lowry is no stranger to expansion teams. In 1993, he was selected by the Florida Panthers to join their inaugural roster and was nicknamed, "Mr. Playoff" during the 1996 Stanley Cup run, leading the team with 10 goals and seven assists. He is the father of Winnipeg forward and team captain Adam Lowry.

BOB WOODS

ASSISTANT COACH

About Bob: The 2024-25 season marks Woods' first as an assistant coach for the Kraken. Woods' coaching career spans nearly three decades and includes 13 years spent as an assistant coach in the NHL with stops in Washington (2009-10 to 2011-12), Anaheim (2011-12 to 2013-14), Buffalo (2016-17) and mostly recently Minnesota, where he was on the coaching staff for parts of the last seven seasons (2017-18 to 2023-24). This will mark the second time in his career that Woods has worked under head coach Dan Bylsma, also part of his staff in Buffalo during the 2016-17 season. Woods played sixteen seasons of professional hockey as a defenseman in several leagues, including the AHL, ECHL, WHL and more. He won two championships over the course of his career, first the 1997 Calder Cup (AHL championship) with the Hershey Bears and then the Kelly Cup (ECHL championship) in 1999 with the Mississippi Sea Wolves. For Seattle, Woods oversees the defensemen corps, including managing which pairs are on the ice at any point during games. He and assistant coach Jessica Campbell collaborate on the Kraken power play strategies and personnel.

Fun Facts: Elected to the ECHL Hall of Fame in 2012 after totaling 523 points (159 goals, 264 assists) in 599 regular-season games. Selected to be a part of the Saskatchewan Junior Hockey Hall of Fame's 2019 induction class. Woods and Bylsma have competed against each other in AHL championships series as players, assistant coaches and head coaches.

COACHES

STEVE BRIERE

GOALTENDING COACH

About Steve: In his third season as the team's goaltending coach after spending seven seasons (2015-16 to 2021-22) with Toronto Maple Leafs as goaltending coach. During his tenure with the Leafs, goaltenders Frederik Andersen (2020) and Jack Campbell (2022) were each named to the NHL All-Star Game. Prior to joining Toronto, Briere served as goaltending coach for WSHL Casper Coyotes (2014- 15), NAHL Topeka Roadrunners (2010-11 to 2014-15), USHL Omaha Lancers (2009-10) and NCAA University of Alabama- Huntsville (2007-08). He played three years of collegiate hockey at the University of Alabama-Huntsville and played parts of 10 seasons as pro goaltender in the AHL and ECHL, among others.

Fun Facts: Returned to coach at alma mater, University of Alabama-Huntsville, in 2009-10 with team winning the conference title and qualifying for the NCAA tournament. Has worked closely with Mitch Korn, legenday goaltending coach who is currently with Nashville. Founded Canadian Professional Goalie Schools, which offers elite goaltending camps and mentoring programs for junior hockey players.

TIM OHASHI

HEAD VIDEO ANALYST

About Tim: Returns for fourth season with the Kraken. His NHL career began as an intern with the Washington Capitals' coaching staff in 2014. Then- head coach Barry Trotz created and offered Ohashi a full-time video analyst role for the 2015-16 season. He also won a Stanley Cup as a member of the Capitals' coaching staff in 2018. Tim played club hockey at Bates College in Lewiston, ME. Tim and colleague Brady Morgan contribute pivotal coach's challenges, most memorably during the 2022-23 Stanley Cup Playoffs, getting a goal recalled in a decisive Game 7 of the first round in which the Kraken subsequently won, 2-1, at Colorado against the defending Cup champs Avalanche.

Fun Facts: Major back issue caused him to return home to Maryland for surgery where his mother persuaded him to pursue career in sports by taking graduate courses in sports management at Georgetown University. Avid fan of baseball. Wife grew up in Bellevue, WA, and father lives in Washougal, WA.

BRADY MORGAN

ASSISTANT VIDEO ANALYST

About Brady: He's back with Seattle for a fourth season with the Kraken after five years with the American Hockey League Tucson Roadrunners, serving as video coach and hockey operations assistant since the franchise's early days in southern Arizona. He also served in a pre-scouting role. Prior to his AHL position, Morgan worked as a hockey ops assistant with the Western Hockey League's Seattle Thunderbirds, with duties that included recording and logging video for coaches' use between periods and post-game, plus managing players' arrangements with billet families. While attending Arizona State, he served as a hockey operations intern with the Arizona Coyotes for two seasons (2013-15).

Fun Facts: Raised in Phoenix, earned business degree at Arizona State. Childhood hero is Hockey Hall of Famer Steve Yzerman. Brady and Tim Ohashi, got goals recalled in Games 6 and 7 of the 2023 Stanley Cup playoffs, the latter reversing the score to 2-1 in favor of the Kraken, which turned out to be the series-winning result.

MATTHEW LARKE

SKILLS CONSULTANT

About Matthew: Joined the Kraken coaching staff from a similar role with USA Hockey's National Team Development Program (U17 and U18 teams) during 2021-22 season and having played professional hockey from 2008 to 2016. He has worked as a skill development coach with the USHL's Muskegon Lumberjacks (2019-20) and the Ontario Hockey League's Flint Firebirds (2018-20). Larke's eight-year professional playing career spanned nine teams across the CHL, ECHL and EIHL, most recently suiting up for the ECHL's Fort Wayne Komets during the 2015-16 season. Matthew stays late during practices and skates for 1-on-1 work at home and on the road.

Fun Facts: Matthew effectively "auditioned" for his role by joining the Kraken coaching staff for the team's development camp after the NHL Draft in July 2022. He impressed and earned a spot to live out his NHL dream. Any number of young players (and even veterans like Yanni Gourde) on the Kraken roster praise Matthew for his dedication to player improvement.

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BROADCAST TEAM

JOHN FORSLUND

John is play-by-play announcer for the Kraken Hockey Network. He joined the Kraken for the inaugural season in 2021 after 25 years as the mega-popular voice of the Carolina Hurricanes/Hartford Whalers, moving with the franchise when relocating to Raleigh in 1997. John has a unique connection with GM Ron Francis, calling the Hockey Hall of Famer's games as a player in Hartford and Carolina, then as Carolina GM and now in Seattle. Forslund is the lead voice of Prime Video's Monday Hockey Night and works national games for Turner Sports after years in an expansive role with NBC Sports, NHL on Versus and ESPN National Hockey Night.

EDDIE OLCZYK

Eddie, aka "Edzo," joined the booth for the 2022-23 season as one of the Kraken's TV color analysts. He spent the previous 15 seasons with the Chicago Blackhawks as their TV color analyst. Olczyk continues to appear on weekly national game broadcasts for TNT as the network's lead analyst. Olczyk spent 16 seasons in the NHL playing for Chicago (debuting at 18), Toronto, Winnipeg (now Arizona), New York Rangers, Los Angeles and Pittsburgh (where he was later head coach). He is a Stanley Cup winner as player (New York Rangers 1994 and member of the United States Hockey Hall of Fame (2012).

JT BROWN

JT is a TV color analyst for all KHN broadcasts, starting with John Forslund for Seattle's inaugural season in 2021. Brown spent 11 seasons as a collegiate and professional hockey player, notching 72 points (23 goals, 49 assists) in 365 career NHL regular season games with Tampa Bay (Kraken forward Yanni Gourde was a teammate), Anaheim and Minnesota. Prior to signing with Tampa Bay as an undrafted free agent, he played two seasons with NCAA Division I University of Minnesota-Duluth Bulldogs, winning the 2011 National Championship and named the Frozen Four's Most Outstanding Player.

ALISON LUKAN

Alison joined our TV broadcast team full-time as a color analyst in 2022-23 after serving as a contracted analyst during the inaugural season. She was an instant hit with fans for her clever and easy-to-understand use of data plus deep knowledge of the sport and NHL. She is a writer and commentator for Kraken digital channels and the Kraken app. Before joining Seattle, Lukan covered the Columbus Blue Jackets and Ohio State men's and women's hockey for The Athletic and Fox Sports Ohio. She was co-leader of the 2022 SEAHAC analytics conference.

BRETT FESTERLING

Brett joined the KHN studio team as an analyst this season. After his playing career, he transitioned into a hockey analyst for Vancouver (BC) sports radio. As a 6-foot-1 defenseman, he played 88 NHL games with Anaheim and Winnipeg plus 241 games with eight different American Hockey League franchises. Brett played eight seasons in Germany to finish his pro career. He was the star player and captain of the Western Hockey League 2007 WHL Vancouver Giants Memorial Cup championship team.

IAN FURNESS

After 14 years as NFL Seahawks Fox 13 KCPQ reporter and a familiar radio host on 93.3 KJR radio, Ian joined KHN as the anchor for pre- and post-game coverage and intermissions. Furness worked the mic for WHL teams in his early career. In 1991-92, he volunteered to do Thunderbirds pre-game and intermission work on radio, soon getting the chance to call the 1992 Memorial Cup championship game hosted by Seattle. Ian is following in the anchor footsteps of his late father, Milt Furness, a local TV reporter and anchor at KING, KIRO and a long stint at KOMO.

EVERETT FITZHUGH

Everett, aka "Fitz," is the play-by-play announcer for the Kraken's radio broadcasts on KJR 950 and KJR 93.3. Before stepping boldly into a lifelong dream to become an NHL broadcaster, Fitzhugh spent five seasons with Cincinnati of the ECHL, a developmental pro league for the NHL. He filled dual role as the Cyclones' director of media relations and broadcasting. His time in Cincinnati included Fitzhugh guest-broadcasting his first NHL game for the Washington Capitals plus serving on the broadcast crew for the 2018 CCM/ECHL All-Star Classic.

AL KINISKY

Al Kinisky was named color analyst for Kraken broadcasts on KJR prior for the 2023-24 season. He first came to Seattle to play for the Western Hockey League Seattle Thunderbirds in 1989 after spending a year in Northern Saskatchewan playing for the Nipawin Hawks. With the Thunderbirds he totaled 83 points (27 goals, 56 assists) in 149 regular-season games. After his playing career, Kinisky worked in the tech industry while also playing, coaching and working as color analyst for the WHL Everett Silvertips radio broadcasting team for a decade.

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BY BOB CONDOR

Fans tuning into Seattle games on the greatly expanded Kraken Hockey Network are privy to a game-long conversation that is nothing short of informative, entertaining, fun, fast-moving, lively and, let's agree, second to none in the NHL.

Did we say fun? How about KHN analyst Eddie Olczyk explaining why new coach Dan Bylsma was looking downward after Edmonton tied up the preseason home finale at 2-2. Fans' first thought: Oh, he's upset about the goal and the tie score, since Kraken went up two-nothing on a Shane Wright spin-and-shoot-between-his-legs highlight-reel goal earlier in the period. Not the case, said Olczyk, explaining while also jabbing his good friend and supreme-play-by-play man, John Forslund.

"For people maybe newer to the game, when they see coaches looking down at their feet all the time" said Olczyk, who was an NHL head coach in Pittsburgh for two seasons. "They're not looking at their shoes. They're looking at - you have nice shoes on tonight, Johnny -"

"I do," said Forslund, embracing the comedic straight-man role.

"They're looking at a TV monitor down there," continued Olczyk, not missing a beat. "They're looking at replays, trying to go to school on what's going on. Work to be done, a lot of teaching points going on, especially here in the second period."

On the ice, a whistle blows for a stoppage in play and the ensuing TV timeout.

"5:23, left in it from Seattle," said Forslund, talking over an exquisite nighttime camera shot outside showing Climate Pledge Arena and the city skyline.

"Those look really nice, though," said Olczyk. "They are nice. They look good."

"You like these shoes?" asked Forslund, deftly reminding viewers about the subject matter." They're comfortable."

"You look comfortable," said Olczyk as the telecast goes to a commercial break.

CUT TO THE KHN PRODUCTION TRUCK

KHN producer Ryan Schaber is listening and laughing while watching 13 monitors showing different camera angles and locations. He proclaims that Olczyk and Forslund are in "midseason form" while to his right in the front row of the production truck, KHN director Patrick Brown is smiling while keep his eyes affixed to his own set of 13 monitors.

During the game, Brown literally calls the shot of which camera is on your screen as players and the puck zip up and down the ice. To his credit, when a camera operator is spot-on with an angle and Brown goes to another camera, he will double back to that operator with acknowledgement ("I shoulda gone to your shot"). Pre-game, he is checking everything from lighting of a camera's output ("that one looks pasty") to whether a shot is not framed tight enough to audio quality ("oooh, I don't like that sound, do you hear that?").

In the KHN production truck (OK, it's more of a semi-tractor trailer, but we're going all in on "truck"), 17 crew members are providing those replays that Dan Bylsma is watching and Olczyk and fellow analyst JT Brown (in between the benches on this night) are analyzing. As producer, Schaber is overseeing the whole broadcast but zeroes in each game on calling for replay angles. Brown is calling the live shots deciding, say, when to pull back to see more of the ice or, push in to see a goaltender's facial expression after a save or goal.

One enters the KHN truck in its middle. A left turn brings you to three rows of Schaber and Brown (both front row) plus others who working graphics, special effects, the score bug, camera quality and control board that makes all those views come to life, happily, over-the-air and on Prime Video for subscribers this season in Washington, Alaska and Oregon. One crew member to the left side of the door is Scott Gill from Kraken partner TEGNA, there to make sure feeds are going out properly to all over-the-air stations and affiliates that will reach 96 percent of viewers in the three Pacific Northwest states at no additional cost to their current TV availability and subscriptions. Prime and those stations will be airing 72 games (there are 10 nationally televised games).

MAPPING THE 'NERVE CENTER'

Straight ahead walking into the KHN truck is a sound booth that, from Schaber's perspective, is the nerve center. He embraces all of the unique sounds of hockey played at the NHL level with microphones in the boards to hear the stick and skate sounds and lots more. Plus, there is no John-Eddie-JT game call without it working properly.

Take a right in the truck and you will observe four replay operators with assorted camera angles who respond to Schaber's camera callouts (see "Quarterbacking the Telecast" section below) to put together seamless

replays from all available and informative angles. Plus, those replay pros are putting together highlight packages for Scott Malone's "shoulder programming" shows or for use end of game when there is airtime to be filled before a player is ready to talk with KHN reporter Piper Shaw in her must-watch post-game interviews.

PREPPED FOR KHN REGULAR SEASON DEBUT

Speaking of the aforementioned midseason form, Schaber and his crew displayed its own readiness with a broadcast that started with a pre-game show, directed by Scott Malone, sitting just left of Schaber. New KHN host Ian Furness, a familiar TV and sports radio voice in the PNW, debuted and paired with popular KHN analyst Alison Lukan.

Back for her fourth season with the Kraken, Lukan was two-for-two in pre-game segments: One, she called out Bylsma's desire to put center Shane Wright between veteran wings (Oliver Bjorkstrand earned the primary assist on Wright's first of two goals Wednesday and Eeli Tolvanen did the same on the second score). Two, she and Malone had worked out a "how to create more offense" graphic-and-discussion ahead of the home team scoring a half-dozen goals.

There was plenty of evidence the KHN is prepared when the first regular season games are broadcast Oct. 12 (5 p.m. at St. Paul) and Oct 13 (5 p.m. at Dallas): A brand-new in-arena set for Furness and Lukan, Schaber in sync with Forslund, Olczyk and JT Brown (who was strong from the start, projecting Bjorkstrand to enjoy career highs this season in goals and assists, then later explained in the immediate replay of Wright's highlight-reel play how Bjorkstrand's skills and hockey IQ set up his young center).

CALM LEADERS DURING ORGANIZAED CHAOS

For his part, Forslund works off Patrick Brown's camera calls during the live action and appreciates the demeanors of both Brown and Schaber, who both came over from ROOT Sports to become part of the Kraken organization. The future Hockey Hall of Famer Forslund is glad about that.

"They have a calmness that any good producer and director combo needs," said Forslund, stepping out of the broadcast two hours before game time to talk on the press bridge. Sometimes things hit the fan and you have to be able to navigate your way through it. Both of those guys know how to do that. I knew right away [in the inaugural season with all three in the same roles] that they have the know-how to do it. Once we got into that first year, the chemistry was great."

Forslund made a point of commending the local camera operators for Kraken games. He said during the inaugural season, they all made their way to see Forslund before games (the announcer arrives by 3:30 p.m. "unless I have to pick up Edzo, then I'm later," getting his own jab in). Those camera operators would ask questions about phrases Forslund was using and how to anticipate where the puck might be going. They "wanted to be educated" and "enjoy doing these games for fans," said Forslund.

QUARTERBACKING THE TELECAST

Schaber's official role is producer but the roles he plays are multiple and overlapping.

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He talks all game to Forslund, Olczyk and JT Brown about what's next. One example: informing Forslund about what is planned on screen when coming back from commercial (when one of the return shots showed the giant bobbleheads that will be making visits all around town before landing a pre-game plaza Tuesday morning at Climate Pledge Arena, Olczyk asked Forslund, "where's your bobblehead" and quipped that he took his Forslund bobblehead from last season and put it on the hood of his car).

With Olczyk and JT Brown, both make suggestions to Schaber about what action they want to analyze on various replays while Schaber will also ask one or both to cover a certain topic during the game call or on replay. Olczyk's requests for replays are plentiful and he frequently asks for a sequence that shows how a scoring chance was ignited by a play in the defensive or neutral zone.

He likes to work the telestrator to indicate what is about to unfold in a replay. One sample from Wednesday's game: Olczyk circling where Edmonton defenseman Travis Dermott was on the ice at three different times and spaces in the offensive zone. That visuals helped explain how Kraken defenders "lost" Dermott, allowing him to be solo net-front and score on a third close-in puck whack after SEA goalie Philipp Grubauer had made two exemplary saves. In the truck, like a quarterback complimenting his blockers, Schaber cheerfully noted to the whole group, "Hey, Woody [camera operator], first telestrator of the year [and of KHN, for that matter]."

SIGNAL CALLING THE (RE)PLAYS

Schaber's QB role comes complete with replay-order signals. On Wright's first goal, he called "full speed, A next, stay on A, silver." He then commented, "Oh, aah, gorgeous," probably meaning both the rookie's between-the-legs move and the work of the KHN camera operators.

Free agent signee and defenseman Brandon Montour opened the night's scoring and produced another set of QB-like calls from Schaber: Blue, gold, gimme A, hero on blue, red and see if you can hear 62 calling for the puck [that comment courtesy of Olczyk using the talkback feature to mention it to Schaber].

"I look at anywhere from four to maybe eight camera angles," said Schaber. "I named those machines red, blue, gold, silver, A, B, x and y. I assign what cameras they take into the replay machines. If I want to see a tight angle of a goal, I know that's going to be on red. When the goal happens, I say, back up [rewind] red, right? There is where I want to start it., Then Pat says to the control board operator, 'Let's affect the red, roll red'. And they roll it. The I tell them what the next one is."

SO MANY CONVERSATIONS, ALL AT ONCE

Each game night in the KHN production truck features an ongoing gusher of high-intensity but grounded conversations. Schaber is talking with his four broadcasters (including Shaw) on four different talkback lines, plus in conversation with the graphics group (three strong), Patrick Brown, the sound booth and, of course, four replay operators.

Director Brown is in constant conversation with camera operators over an open group line, rapidly calling out camera shot sequences to the control board, talking to Schaber when needed or maybe to inject humor. Shoulder programming director Malone is in running conversation with Lukan about what segments to do in the next intermission or post-game, plus he checks in with Furness too, along with Stu Vitoe, who puts together stats-driven packages from a remote location to more easily access data.

There's more purposeful chatter: A pair of graphics crew members discussing who takes what sponsor presentation or lower-third-of-screen ID or dozens of other decisions. The replay operators commenting on work product or a sweet goal. Tegna's Gill checking in with contacts for all of the stations now carrying Kraken games.

All of which lift fans to the irresistible conversation among Forslund, Olczyk, JT Brown and Shaw when she gets her turns in-game or at the top of intermissions and game-end. What might be a cacophony of conversations is in fact a symphony, more especially sweet music when the Kraken win.

"It's unscripted television, a live event," said Schaber. "You have ideas going into the game of how you think or expect things to unfold. If they do, great. But if they don't, we react and still tell the stories ... People grow an affinity to the people [Forslund and the analysts] that are in their living rooms every night. They become a soundtrack for the season. Fans will come back for that. You have to entertain too. You want to be able to have fun. It's a balance." ⚓

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MON-TOURING THE ICE

BRANDON MONTOUR'S HIGH-END SKATING IS NOT JUST NOTICEABLE, IT'S A DIFFERENCE-MAKER IN BOTH ENDS OF THE ICE

BY ALISON LUKAN

There's a saying that most definitely applies to Brandon Montour: "Making something look easy is the hardest thing to do." If you watch the Kraken defender maneuver around the ice, it looks effortless – sometimes to the point it almost looks like a dance. But more often than not, he's always where he needs to be, doing the things he needs to do.

"I think [skating] has always been a strength of mine," Montour said. "If I'm not moving my feet, or I'm not skating, it's more challenging for me out there. I know what my strengths are, and if I'm [using them] and I feel good and I'm skating, that's when I'm playing at the top of my game."

What makes Montour's skating so good? Few are better to ask than Kraken assistant coach, Jessica Campbell who has served as a skills coach to multiple future and current NHL players.

"The one thing that makes [Montour] such a dominant player is his speed, his power in his skating," said Campbell, "so much more than technical. But then there are the tactical elements, where he's extremely evasive.

"He's comfortable on his edges, so that allows him to move east, west, laterally, especially as an offensive defenseman. It makes him very dangerous and hard to defend for an [opposing] forward as well. In all areas, [his skating] complements his style of play. It makes him the player that he is."

THE DETAILS BEHIND ELITE SKATING

So how does Montour do that? There are plenty of little details. As the quarterback on the power play, Montour doesn't just hold court at the top of the zone, he moves throughout space. He might drop in on the right side for a shot attempt, then execute a retrieval to keep the puck in play (a strength of Montour's according to Campbell). He regularly shifts to the left flank. With each of his strides – including a slight heel-to-heel turn – Montour's moves keep him constantly open as a passing target and thus a scoring threat. The heel-to-heel turn allows Montour to create separation and gain power without having to turn away from the play.

"Just the elusiveness to his edge work makes him able to carry the puck east, west, or up the ice," Campbell said. "He's able to be around pucks and move the puck to join [the rush] right away, which to me, it's why it looks like it's dancing."

Fans certainly know Montour can be an offensive weapon, but his skating is just as important defensively. His feet power him to get to where he needs to be quickly and effectively. Last season in the Stanley Cup Final, no Florida skater had more loose puck recoveries in the defensive zone than Montour's 98.

"From a defensive standpoint, [what she calls edge dynamics] help any time you're going back on a retrieval puck, having deception on the puck to beat your check, just with your feet alone and your edge work," Campbell said. "Half the time the forward is attacking the defenseman, and they're reading off his feet going one way. So [the forward] scans that way. But when [Montour] has the edge dynamics that he does, he can present his toe caps one way when he already knows he's going to come up the other side."

DOUBLE-PUMP DOUBLES DOWN ON FOES

Another standout detail among the many in Montour's footwork is the double pump (or double push). It's not easy – you push off one foot's edge and then the other – but it allows a skater to create power without giving up any part of a stride or advantage. That's in favorable contrast to using only one side when using a crossover.

If you're carrying the puck, the double-pump move gives you options. If you're defending, it means you can move laterally and not give up space, either in your gap or toward a shooting or passing lane.

When Montour traverses NHL rinks with his set of moves, plus the awareness of when to use them, is what separates Montour as a skater. His ability is built from a mix of natural-born skating talent nurtured by intentional skating workouts.

"I think [Montour] is in a category of his own," Campbell said. "He has more of that strong power structure: his stride, he's quick. It allows him to be a force every night.

"There're many defensemen in the league that you, right away, think of as great skaters. But I think what makes [Montour] such a good skater is his puck skills. He's creative with his puck skills, so it matches his feet. In everything he does, he makes a play, he's joining. You look at his power play ability, his skating makes him that much more of a shooting threat and an offensive threat ... [All of that] puts him at the top among NHL skaters." ⚓

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2024-25 SEATTLE KRAKEN

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MATTY BENIERS

FORWARD

10

LEFT

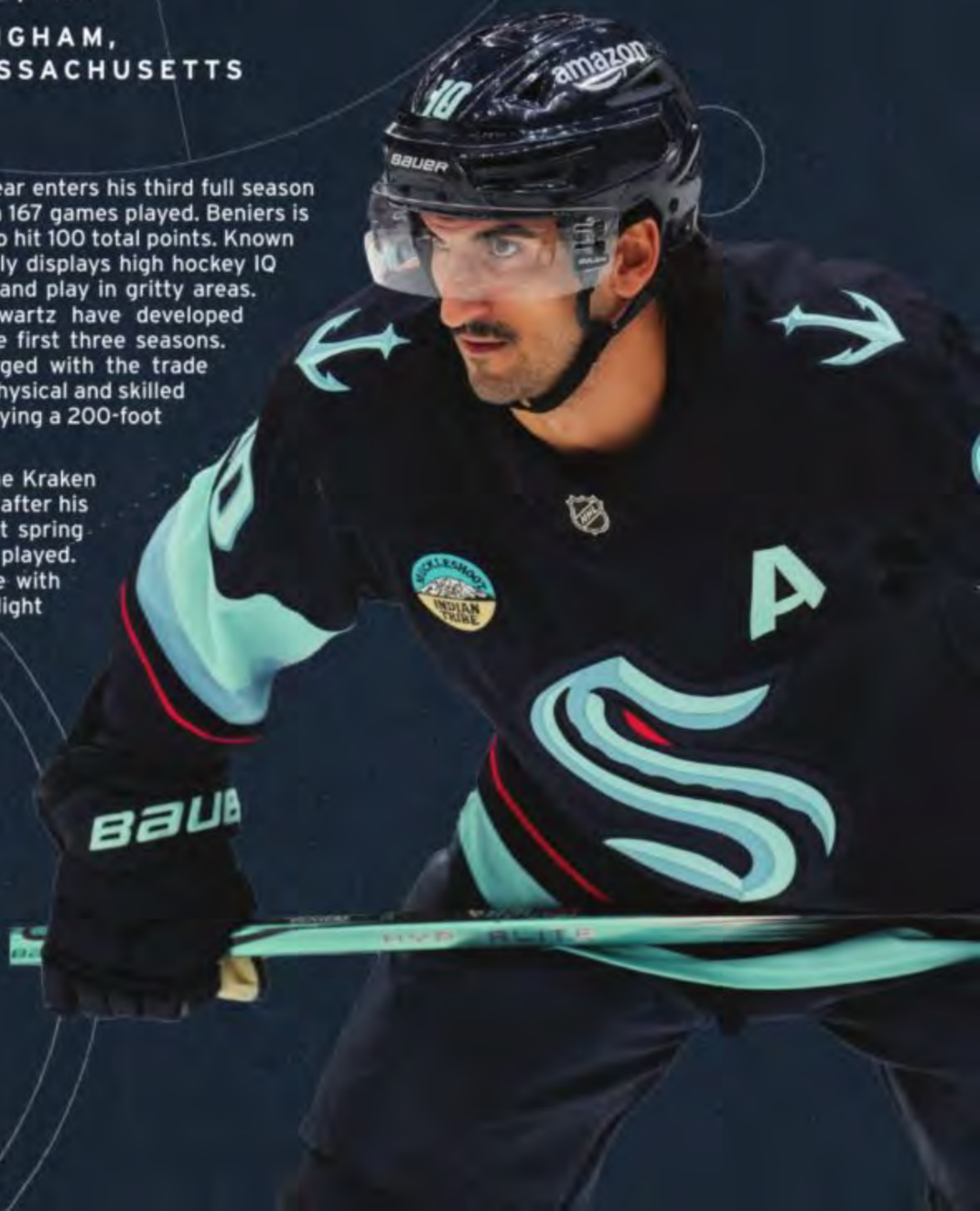
6-2 | 181

HINGHAM, MASSACHUSETTS

ABOUT MATTY: The 2023 Rookie of the Year enters his third full season in the league with 42 goals and 61 assists in 167 games played. Beniers is just the second player from his draft class to hit 100 total points. Known for his play in all zones, Beniers consistently displays high hockey IQ and a willingness to forecheck, backcheck and play in gritty areas. Beniers and veteran forward Jaden Schwartz have developed chemistry as linemates during parts of the first three seasons. This year, the duo's production supercharged with the trade acquisition of Kappo Kakko to round out a physical and skilled trio unfraid to be net-front and intent on playing a 200-foot game.

Beniers, the first-ever NHL Draft pick of the Kraken when chosen No. 2 overall in 2021, debuted after his sophomore NCAA season at Michigan. That spring he tallied points in nine of his ten games played. His first NHL goal came at Climate Pledge with his family in the crowd, a career top-highlight moment by Beniers' own estimation.

FUN FACT: Beniers' mother, Christine, is a former Broadway actress ("Chorus Line" among her credits) and now an attorney who served as a community theater director, often "drafting" Matty to fill singing roles in musical reviews. When he was a 16-year-old newcomer to the USA Hockey National Team Development Program, coaches asked players to reveal some hidden talent or personal fact. Beniers instantly said, "I can sing," and belted out a Frankie Valli tune from "Jersey Boys."



BAUER
NHL
MUCKLESHOOT
INDIAN TRIBE
A

OLIVER BJORKSTRAND

FORWARD

22

RIGHT

6-0 | 175

DERNING, DNK

ABOUT OLIVER: In his second season with Seattle, the 29-year-old played in all 82 games and set career highs in assists (39), points (59) and power play points (25). It was the fourth consecutive season in which the Dane had 40 or more points and the third straight time he scored 20 or more goals (he is one of just eight NHL forwards with at least 20 goals and 55 takeaways in each of the last three seasons). Acquired via trade in the summer of 2022, Bjorkstrand became an integral part of the Kraken's offensive attack, including four playoff goals during the team's inaugural playoff appearance - two of which were the only Seattle goals in a series-deciding Game 7 against Colorado in Round 1. The Kraken received Bjorkstrand in return for 2023 third and fourth-round picks that GM Ron Francis had acquired in previous trades, providing a textbook example of how to use "draft capital" wisely. Prior to joining the Kraken, in juniors, the Denmark-born forward was a star for WHL Portland with 63 goals in his final of three seasons.

FUN FACT: The forward's nickname, "the Maestro," was given to him by then-Columbus scout Bob Strumm, who saw Bjorkstrand in a relegation game during the 2012 IIHF World U-18s in which Bjorkstrand had three assists. The scouting report began with, "The Maestro showed up tonight." Bjorkstrand's father, Todd, is a Minnesota native who played 14 seasons in the Danish pro league.

47° 37' 19"N 122° 21' 14"W

ANDRE BURAKOVSKY

FORWARD

95

LEFT

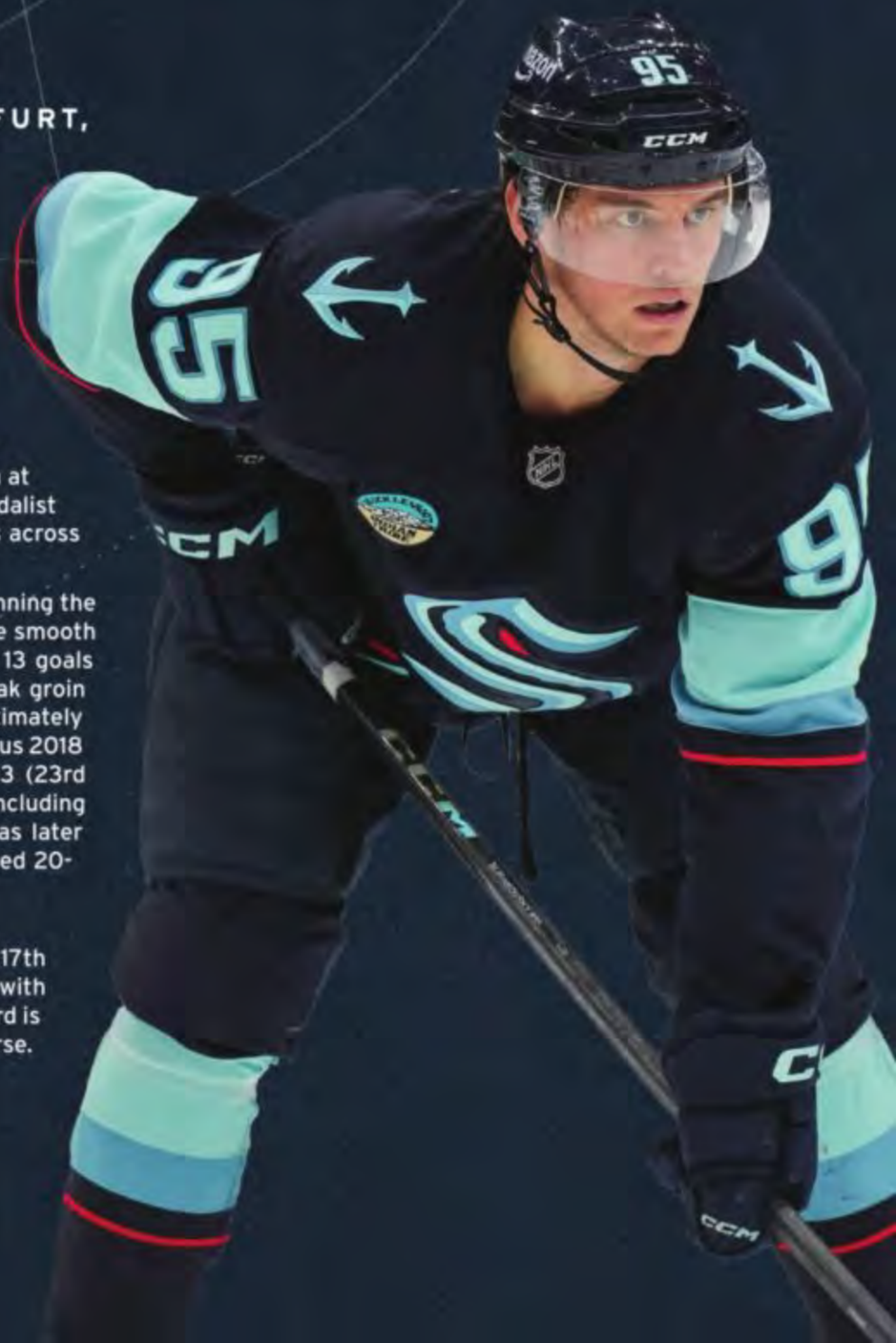
6-3 | 209

KLANGENFURT, AUSTRIA

ABOUT ANDRE: Six games into the 2023-24 season, Andre was looking strong before an arguably late check shelved him for six to eight weeks. He missed 20 games with that injury and then 13 games with three more injury stretches. In 49 games played, the 29-year-old scored seven goals and added nine assists. GM Ron Francis was happy for "Burky" to play "highly competitive games" for Sweden at the 2024 Men's World Championship. The bronze medalist notched four goals and seven assists. Only five skaters across all teams scored more points.

Signed by Seattle in July 2022 as free agency after winning the Stanley Cup with Colorado, the second of his career, the smooth playmaking winger topped the Kraken in scoring with 13 goals and 26 assists in 49 games before a post-All-Star break groin injury led to missing the rest of the regular season, ultimately requiring surgery. Andre scored two goals in the victorious 2018 Cup Final with Washington, which drafted him in 2013 (23rd overall). He scored key goals in Colorado's Cup run (including Game 1 OT game-winner during a series in which it was later revealed he played with two major injuries) and averaged 20-plus goals in each of three Avs seasons.

FUN FACT: Burakovsky's father, Robert, was drafted 217th by the New York Rangers in 1985 and played 23 games with Ottawa and 17 years in Sweden's top pro league. The word is Burky can consistently drive 320 yards on the golf course. No teammate has stepped forward to deny it.



95
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JOEY DACCORD

GOALTENDER

35

LEFT

6-2 | 201

BOSTON, MA

ABOUT JOEY: After showing great potential in 10 games across the first two Kraken seasons, in his first full NHL campaign, Daccord made his mark as a true NHL goaltender. In 50 regular season games (19-18-11) last year, the Boston, MA native set career highs in games played, started (46), wins (19), save percentage (.916, a franchise record best), goals against average (2.46) and shutouts (3). One of those shutouts came on Jan. 1 when Daccord backstopped the Kraken to the first shutout in Winter Classic history. This season, the "Joey! Joey!" chants have been frequent as Daccord was halfway toward setting a career-high wins by the end of November.

Daccord was a major factor for the Coachella Valley Firebirds (2022-23). He backstopped CVF within one win of an AHL Championship while posting career bests in games played (38) and shutouts (3). Prior to going pro, Daccord played three seasons at Arizona State University. In the 2018-19 season, he was a finalist for the Mike Richter Award (top NCAA goaltender), and he is the first ASU player to ever sign an NHL contract (Apr. 1, 2019, Ottawa).

FUN FACT: Joey is Swiss American; his mom was born in Switzerland. His father, Brian Daccord, is the goalie coach at Boston University and has worked across hockey as a goalie coach for two decades. Daccord, a Boston kid, was drafted No. 199 in 2015, the same order in the draft as was his "top athlete of all-time" Tom Brady, the famed champion quarterback.

35
WARRIOR
TRUE

VINCE DUNN

DEFENSEMAN

29

LEFT

6-0 | 200

MISSISSAUGA, ONTARIO

ABOUT VINCE: Kraken's first-pair defenseman was the team's expansion draft selection from St. Louis, and let's agree that worked out well. Last year, he notched 11 goals and 35 assists in 59 games after a breakout season in 2022-23 that was followed by his re-signing with Seattle on a four-year contract for $29.4 million ($7.35 AAV). The 28-year-old demolished all of his offensive career bests from his previous five seasons, notching 14 goals and 50 assists for 64 points, second among all Kraken skaters and tops for assists. Just as important as his point totals, Dunn has grown into a defensive force over his two seasons traversing Climate Pledge Arena ice. Analytics experts have lots of proof stats about Dunn and partner Adam Larsson prospering in prevention during 5-on-5 play.

Prior to joining the Kraken, Dunn played four seasons in St. Louis, playing top-four minutes during the 2019 Stanley Cup title run. A St. Louis second-round pick in 2015, Dunn played three seasons of juniors and one year in the AHL before debuting to play 75 games for the Blues in 2017-2018. After an early-season injury, "Dunner" returned to the lineup in late November, rejoining the aforemention defense partner Larsson and quarterbacking one of the two power play units, forming quite the 1-2 "quarterback" punch along with Brandon Montour

FUN FACT: Dunn is an avid video game player (a big fan of Fortnite). He scored the first NHL goal ever at Climate Pledge Arena.

29
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32
91

47° 37' 19"N 122° 21' 14"W

JORDAN EBERLE

FORWARD

7

RIGHT

5-11 | 190

REGINA, SASKATCHEWAN

ABOUT JORDAN: The veteran forward and captain joined the Krakern in the 2021 Expansion Draft. He has scored at least 16 goals and 30 points in each of his 14 NHL seasons, and last year (17-27-44), he surpassed 40 points for the third consecutive year. In mid-November, he suffered a serious pelvis injury when he awkwardly slammed into the end boards during a home game. His recovery from surgery was estimated at three months.

During the Kraken's historic initial playoff run in 2023, Eberle was the team's second-leading scorer (six goals, five assists). Last year, Eberle celebrated his 1,000th NHL game, and signed a two-year contract extension with the Kraken. Eberle's on-ice skill set in all zones is matched by his leadership qualities. He was thrilled to be named captain.

A prolific scorer in juniors for the WHL Regina Pats (same club as Kraken 2021 second-rounder Ryker Evans), Eberle was a 2008 first-round pick (22nd overall), Eberle was national hero in Canada for his exploits in the World Junior Championships. During a 2009 semi-final against Russia, he scored twice, including a dramatic game-tying goal with five seconds left on the clock before adding a shootout conversion in Team Canada's win.

FUN FACT: The first NHL game Eberle ever attended was one in which he played, making his NHL debut with Edmonton in October 2010 and scoring his first NHL goal that night. He was the Kraken's first All-Star, named to the game during the inaugural season.

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7
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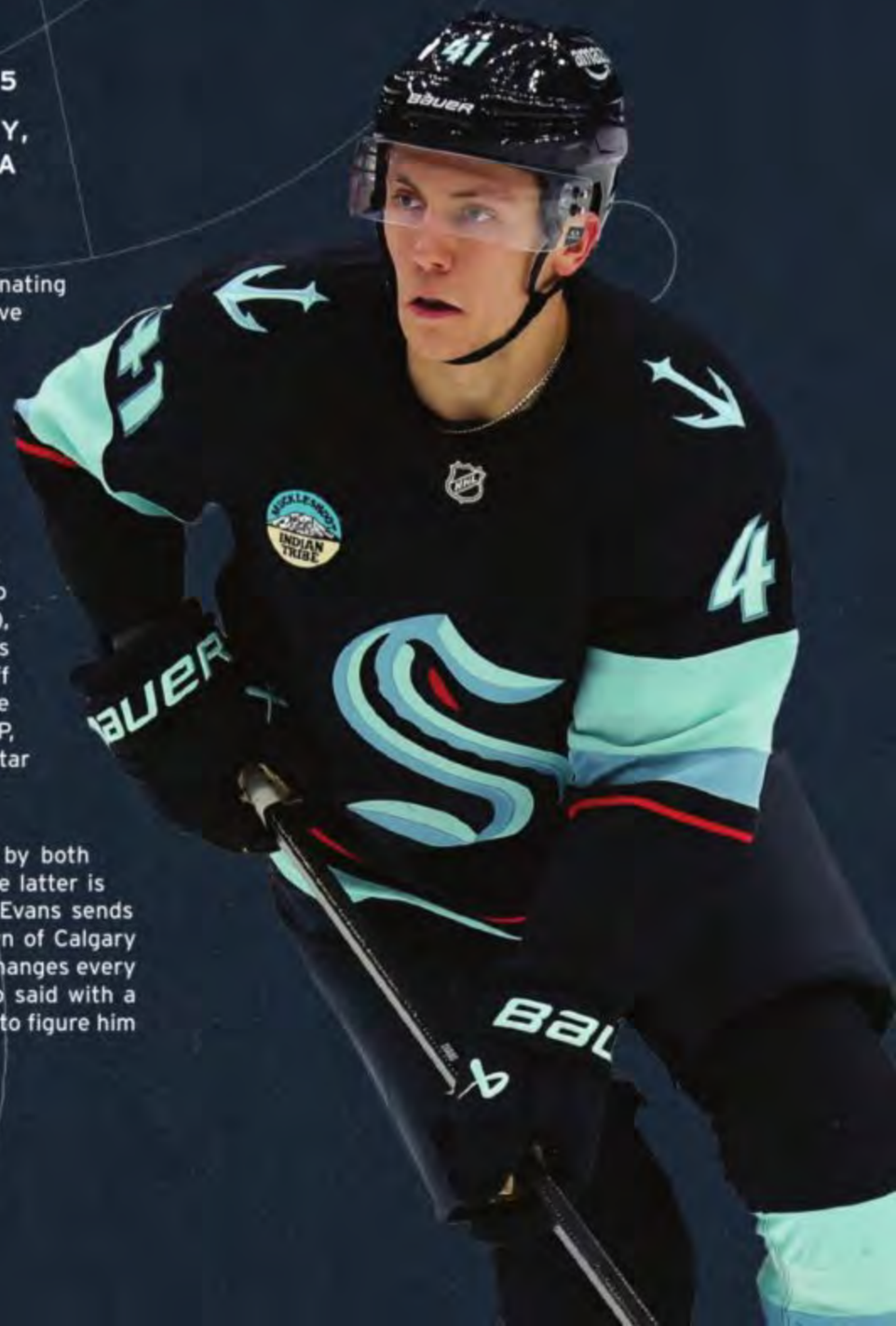
BAUER

RYKER EVANS

DEFENSEMAN

41

LEFT
6-0 | 195
CALGARY, ALBERTA



ABOUT RYKER: Defenseman Ryker Evans is a fascinating 22-year-old defender with tremendous offensive upside. Selected with the No. 35 overall pick in the second round of the 2021 NHL draft, the Calgary, AB, native got his first taste of NHL action last season (36 GP, 1-8-9). His NHL debut was Dec. 7. His first NHL point (a primary assist to Pierre-Edouard Bellemare) came four games later on Dec. 12 (a 4-0 shutout win over Florida), and a first NHL goal followed on Mar. 22 in Arizona. Prior to his time with the Kraken, Evans led the WHL in assists by a defenseman in 2021-22 (47). He then progressed to the AHL and, in a fantastic campaign (71 GP, 6-38-44), was named to the 2023 AHL All-Rookie team. Evans added five goals and 21 assists in 26 AHL playoff games that season, helping push the Firebirds to the Calder Cup Final. In his second AHL season (25 GP, 2-13-15), Evans' was named as the Firebirds' All-Star representative.

FUN FACT: Evans has unique nicknames. He goes by both "Garth" his given middle name and "Blade Boy." The latter is a reference for his diligence with his skate blades. Evans sends all of his blades back to one person in his hometown of Calgary for sharpening and owns 35 pairs of blades that he changes every couple games. To quote teammate Vince Dunn, who said with a smile, "(Evans) is an interesting cat, we're still trying to figure him out... pretty, pretty organized."

PENALTY KILL
PENALTY KILL
PENALTY KILL
WatchGuard
WatchGuard
MPS
TRULY
BAUER

CALE FLEURY

DEFENSEMAN

8

RIGHT

6-1 | 204

CARLYLE, SASKATCHEWAN

ABOUT CALE: Influential leader with AHL Coachella Valley Firebirds, especially during second of two straight Western Conference championships in first two years of the franchise. Sets an example in all phases of Firebirds training as the veteran player who logs monster time on ice stats and is the hardest, most dedicated worker in the weight room/cardio training center. Cale was a standout for AHL Charlotte during the 2021-22 season, posting seven goals and 29 assists for a split squad of Kraken and Florida Panthers prospects. In the 2022-23 season, Cale was a reserve defenseman on the Kraken roster, practicing and traveling with the team, appearing in 12 games. What always stood out about his games was his poise and confidence in making plays in all zones, providing no drop-off in the quality of the defensive corps. Spent the 2023-24 season with Coachella Valley, providing solid and mentoring presence along with logging seven goals and 26 assists during the regular season and an outstanding postseason output of five goals and nine assists in 18 games as the Firebirds repeated at Western Conference champions. As the 2024-25 season got under way for AHL Coachella Valley, Fleury scored a handful of clutch goals to bridge the offensive load as rookies got acclimated to the AHL.

FUN FACT: The Kraken's expansion draft pick from Montreal in 2021, joining brother Haydn (choice from Carolina) on a competitive team for the first time (two years age difference never provided that opportunity coming up the youth hockey ranks).

8
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YANNI GOURDE

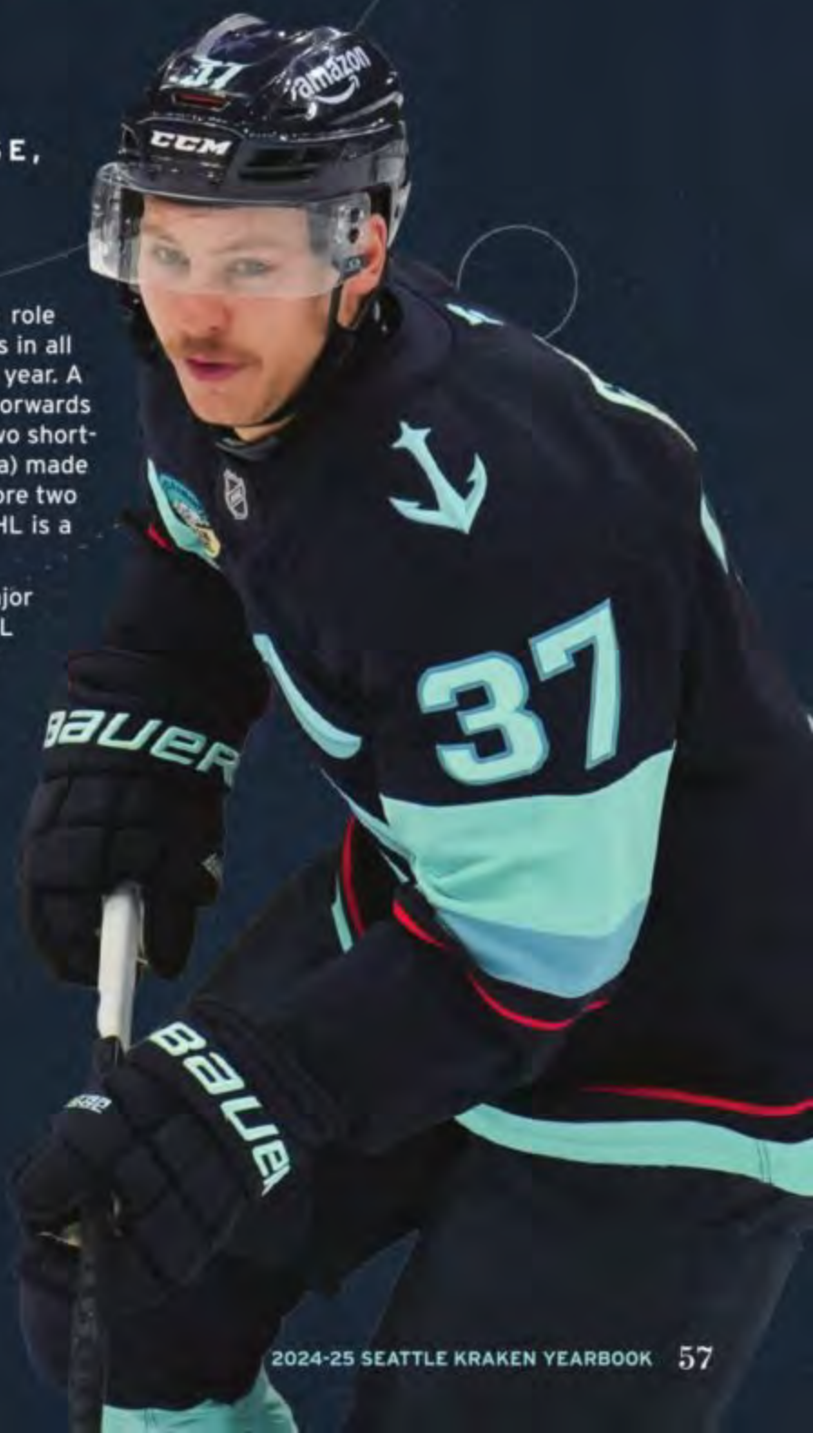
DEFENSEMAN

37

LEFT

5-9 | 174

SAINT-NARCISSE, QUEBEC



ABOUT YANNI: Back-to-back Stanley Cup winner Gourde is a role model for a 200-foot, all-zones player. He's had 30 or more points in all nine of his full NHL seasons, including 11 goals and 22 assists last year. A critical part of the penalty kill, Gourde is routinely one of the top forwards in the league in terms of takeaway plus-minus, and last year, his two short-handed goals in the final game of the season (Apr. 18 at Minnesota) made him the first player in franchise history and fifth NHL skater to score two short-handed goals in the same game. Gourde's journey to the NHL is a study of perseverance and belief.

He went undrafted after a solid junior career in the Quebec Major Junior Hockey League. But he was offered a tryout with the AHL Worcester Sharks. He eventually spent seven seasons in the minor leagues before becoming a regular in the NHL with Tampa Bay. Notably, Yanni scored the only goal (it was shorthanded) in a 1-0 Game 7 victory in 2021 that advanced Tampa Bay to win a second straight Stanley Cup. He openly admits he wasn't always sure he would get the NHL chance.

FUN FACT: Gourde is an avid craftsman and spends his summers building projects around his home, he even built something for an episode of Uncharted last season. An alternate captain on the ice, Yanni is the true captain among teammates who play the Super Tock board game (aka pachisi or Parcheesi) on road trips.

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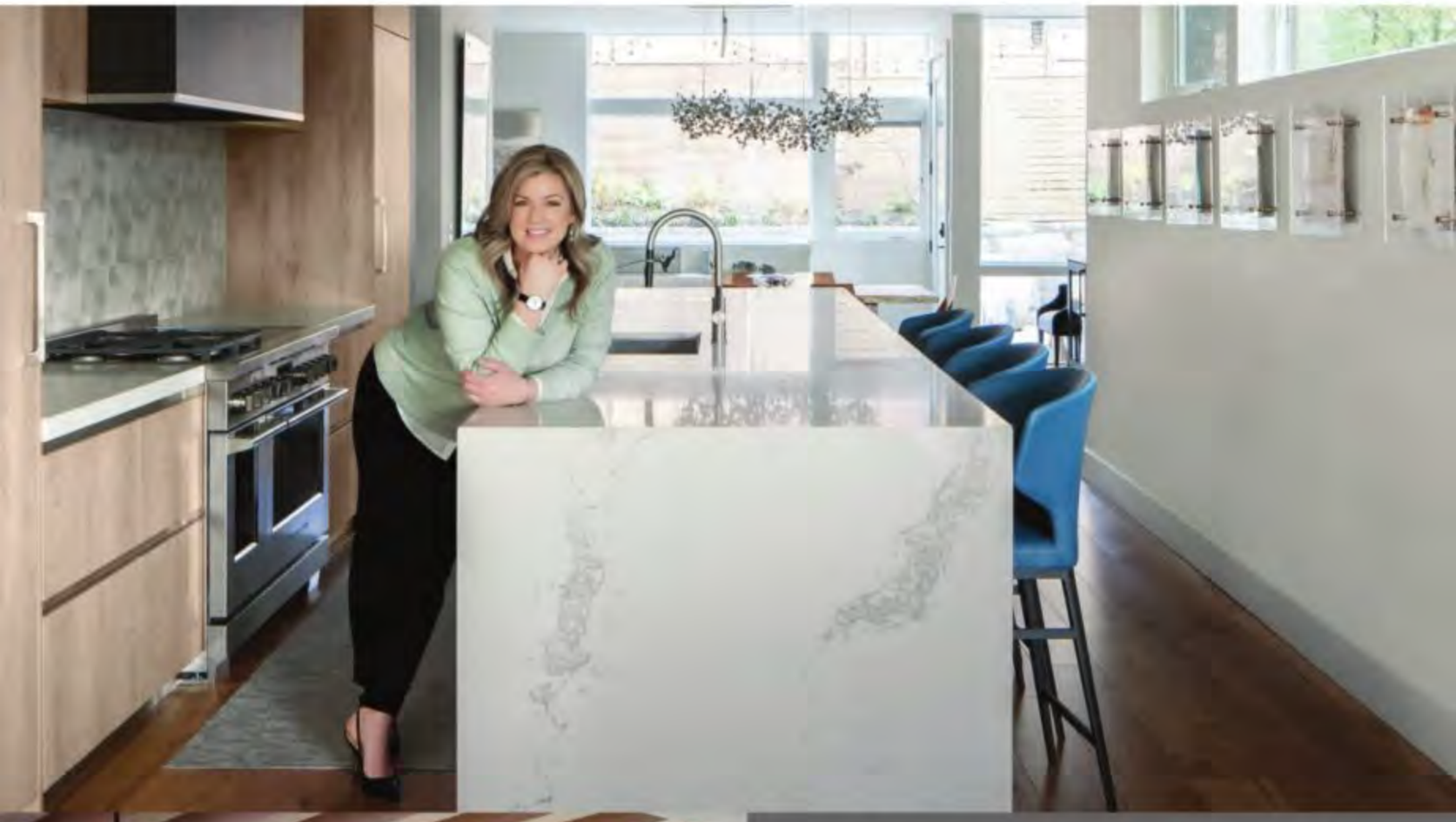

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PHILIPP GRUBAUER

GOALTENDER

31

LEFT

6-1 | 188

ROSENHEIM, DEU

ABOUT PHILIPP: The "German Gentleman" missed two months of game action last season due to an undisclosed upper-body injury, out from early December to mid-February. When the Kraken original returned, he reeled off four straight wins in his starts with a .950 save percentage. He finished the season with a 14-16-2 record and a .899 save percentage. "Grubi" delivered a 2023 postseason that was exactly what the Kraken brain trust had in mind when signing him on the first day of 2021 NHL free agency. Grubauer appeared in all 2023 playoff games after an injury-interrupted regular season. Just ask Kraken play-by-play man and future Hockey Hall of Famer John Forslund, why Seattle won Game 7 in the first round. His answer: Grubauer with big saves in all periods against his former team in a 2-1 series-clinching win. In the second round, Grubi and his teammates nearly pulled a second straight upset, falling 2-1 in a Game 7 against Dallas that advanced the winner to the 2023 Western Conference Final. The German-born goaltender came to North America in 2008 to play juniors in the Ontario Hockey League. He was drafted in the 2010 fourth round by Washington and part of Cup-winning goalie tandem in 2018.

FUN FACT: Grubi has created a deep connection with SAFE (Save a Forgotten Equine), a horse rescue facility in Redmond, WA, prompting him to spend most of his offseasons in Seattle.

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JOHN HAYDEN

FORWARD

15

RIGHT

6-3 | 223

CHICAGO, IL

ABOUT JOHN: Bringing physical play and a scoring touch, free agent forward John Hayden agreed to terms with the Kraken on a one-year, two-way contract with $775,000 AAV for the 2024-25 season. He has been a key member of AHL Coachella Valley's tremendously successful first two seasons and was a solid, reliable contributor when called up to the Kraken as well. In 2022-23, Hayden scored 17 goals and 16 assists with the Firebirds, as well as two goals in seven games with the Kraken before moving to the injured reserve list with a lower-body injury. Hayden rehabbed aggressively to return for the last 10 games of Coachella Valley's deep run to the Calder Cup Final. Last year, Hayden built on that success - putting up 26 points (15-11-26) in 65 AHL games before becoming a big part of the team's playoff run. Hayden's 13 points in 18 games was the third most of any Firebird skater and his nine goals and four assists were career playoff highs for the 29-year-old forward.

FUN FACT: Hayden graduated in 2017 from Yale University, where he majored in political science. After being drafted in the third round of the 2013 NHL Draft by hometown team Chicago, Hayden played four seasons at Yale University. He was team captain during his senior year (2016-17) and scored 34 points (21 goals, 13 assists) in 33 games. He signed a two-year contract with the Blackhawks in mid-March 2017.

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KAPPO KAKKO

FORWARD

84

LEFT

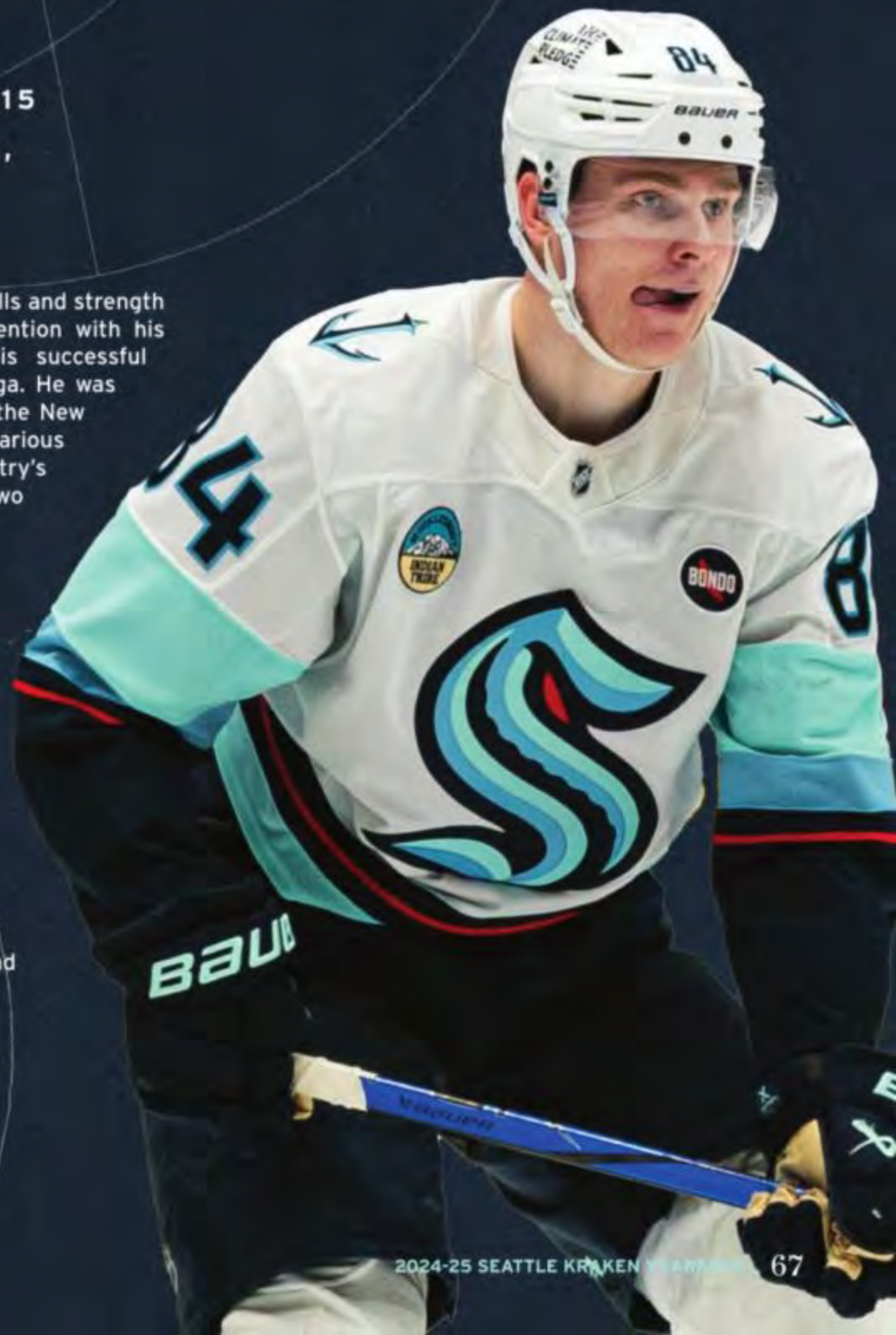
6-1 | 215

TURKU, FI

ABOUT KAAPO: Known for his spectacular puck skills and strength along the boards, Kakko gained international attention with his standout performances in junior hockey and his successful tenure with TPS Turku in Finland's top league, Liiga. He was selected second overall in the 2019 NHL Draft by the New York Rangers. He has represented Finland at various international tournaments, contributing to his country's victory in the 2019 IIHF World Championship with two goals and three assists in 7 games.

At the NHL level since coming to the Kraken in a trade involving defenseman Will Borgen, Kaapo scored a goal and added three assists in his first seven games with Seattle, including a pair of clutch primary assists in a big home win over Utah to finish out the 2024 calendar year. The Finnish winger has spent the last six seasons with the New York Rangers, scoring 61 goals and adding 70 assists in 330 games, making the jump directly to the NHL from his native Finland.

FUN FACT: Kakko is the youngest player in hockey history to win gold in all three IIHF world championship tournaments: the World U18 Championships, the World Junior Championships and the World Championships.



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TYE KARTYE

FORWARD

12

LEFT

5-11 | 202

KINGSTON, ONTARIO

ABOUT TYE: The Kraken signed forward Tye as an undrafted free agent in March 2022 based on his stellar career with the OHL Sault Ste. Marie Greyhounds, whose former players include the top two NHL assists leaders of all time, Wayne Gretzky and Kraken GM Ron Francis. While passed over in entry drafts, Kartye was long on Seattle's radar. He was invited to the Kraken's first training camp in 2021. Kartye started as a fourth-line wing on AHL affiliate Coachella Valley in 2022 and was elevated to the Firebirds' top line by playoff time. When Kraken leading scorer Jared McCann was hurt in Game 4 of the first-round 2023 Stanley Cup Playoffs series with Colorado, Kartye was called up. Fans no doubt remember the 22-year-old scoring his first NHL playoff goal on his first NHL shot.

On New Year's Day 2023, Kartye had notched four goals and ten assists in the first half of the AHL season. He then went on a tear with 43 points in 43 games to become AHL Rookie of the Year. Last year, his first full NHL season, Kartye scored 20 points (11-9-20) in 77 games and set a franchise record in hits with 229. His first NHL regular season goal came on Nov. 2, 2023, against Nashville.

FUN FACT: Kartye experienced one of the longest hockey seasons of any recent pro in 2022-23. He appeared in 100 games (72 AHL regular season, 18 of the CVF's 25 playoff games in two segments, and 10 NHL postseason contests with the Kraken.

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12
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ADAM LARSSON

DEFENSEMAN

6

RIGHT

6-3 | 207

SKELLEFTEA, SWE

ABOUT ADAM: Larsson joined the Kraken as a free agent ahead of the 2021 Expansion Draft and enters the 2024-25 season with a contract extension that will keep him in Seattle through the 2028-29 season. That is good news for Kraken fans, as the alternate captain has been a rock-solid stalwart from day one in Seattle and is always top one or two on the roster in time on ice per game (22:56 last year). Last season, he skated 29:52 on Oct. 14, 2023, against St. Louis, which was both a franchise record and the highest single-game total of his career. Known for his shutdown defense, Larsson has prospered in Seattle on the other end of the ice as well, with 20 goals in three seasons of play. The "Big Cat" has sneaky-good offensive skills and skating ability that is not common among players of his size.

Adam is one of three Kraken notables selected at No. 4 overall, going to New Jersey in 2011. Younger teammate Shane Wright was picked by Seattle at No. 4 in 2022 by Kraken GM Ron Francis, who, yes, is the third Kraken member to be a No. 4 overall pick. The Hartford Whalers (now Carolina Hurricanes) tabbed Francis in 1981.

FUN FACT: The only player to appear in all 82 games in both the first and second seasons for Seattle, Larsson has missed just one game in his three years as a Kraken, and that was for a very good reason: the birth of his first child.

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JOSH MAHURA

DEFENSEMAN

28

LEFT

6-0 | 193

ST. ALBERT, ALBERTA

ABOUT JOSH: The 26-year-old defenseman joins the Kraken after winning the 2024 Stanley Cup with the Florida Panthers. Signed as a free agent this past summer, Mahura provides defensive depth accumulated across 191 NHL games (10 goals, 35 assists, 45 points) with Florida and Anaheim before this season, as well as 21 career playoff games (0-3-3). The move paid off when Vince Dunn was sidelined just four games into this season. Last year with the Panthers, in 30 regular season games (he missed a chunk of the campaign due to injury), Mahura had nine assists, with all but one coming at even strength.

His lone non-even strength was a short-handed assist last March 15 and it marked the first short-handed point of Mahura's career. In 2022-23, the St. Albert, AB, native played in all 82 games of the NHL season and set career highs in goals (4), assists (12) and points (16). Mahura also played three seasons in the AHL (2018-21), where he played 112 games and registered 60 points (11-49-60) and was also named to the 2020-21 AHL All-Star roster.

FUN FACT: Drafted by Anaheim in the third round of the 2016 NHL Draft, Josh broke into the NHL with the Anaheim Ducks during the 2018-19 season. As fate would have it, he debuted in a pairing with fellow 2024-25 Kraken newcomer, defenseman Brandon Montour (drafted by Anaheim, second round, 2014). Both players moved on to Florida, Mahura claimed on waivers and Montour acquired in a trade, to become Stanley Cup champions together last spring.

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JARED McCANN

FORWARD

19

LEFT

6-1 | 191

STRATFORD, ONTARIO

ABOUT JARED: No bio about McCann begins anymore without mentioning his offensive talent. For the past three seasons, the winger has led the Kraken in both goals and points; he was also the first Kraken skater to score 100 points, thanks in part to his first 40-goal season in the NHL in 2022-23. And this season he surpassed the 100-goal mark with Seattle and is the first to reach 200 total points as well. Impressively, the 40-goal season was an accomplishment that came largely due to McCann's play at even strength as he led the NHL in 5-on-5 goals per 60 (1.85) that season.

Last season, the Stratford, ONT native scored 29 goals in addition to adding 33 assists, the latter marked a career-high. He also set bests in power-play goals (9) and power play points (23) as well as ice time per game (16:46). Kraken fans can be happy knowing that McCann will be with the organization through the 2026-27 season as well. The now 28-year-old was the first Seattle player to sign an extension when he signed on for an additional five years in March 2022.

FUN FACT: "Canner" changed his number prior to the 2022-2023 season from 16 to 19. No superstition involved, just a favorite number that McCann wore with OHL Sault Ste. Marie, the same club for which Kraken GM Ron Francis was a legendary player. There are lots of cute dogs among Seattle players, but there is a reason why his corgi, Cheddar, has some 7,500 followers on Instagram.

19
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BEN MEYERS

FORWARD

59

LEFT

5-11 | 194

DELANO, MINNESOTA

ABOUT BEN: The Kraken signed the former NCAA star on July 1 to a one-year, one-way contract (AAV $775,000). Ben split time between Colorado and Anaheim (traded there in exchange for a 2024 fifth-round draft choice) last season, appearing in 23 games. He has played an additional 43 regular games for the Avalanche from 2021 to 2023, plus six of the seven games in which the Kraken ousted the defending champions in the first round of the 2023 Stanley Cup Playoffs. He spent a good part of last season notching 11 goals and 14 assists in 32 games for the AHL Colorado Eagles. He has 49 points (17 G, 32 A) in 62 AHL games. Before embarking on his pro career, the 25-year-old Delano, MN, native played three seasons for NCAA Minnesota (2019-20 through 2021-22). Meyers was 2021-22 Big 10 Player of the Year and a Hobey Baker Award finalist after captaining his team to a conference championship and scoring 41 points (17 G, 24 A) in 34 games. He represented the USA in both the 2022 Winter Olympics (2 G, 2 A in four games) as a teammate with now-teammate Matty Beniers and also represented the USA at the Men's World Championship.

FUN FACT: Won a USHL Clark Cup championship with Fargo (ND) in 2018 after a legendary career in highly competitive Minnesota high school hockey, including one season averaging four points per game.

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BRANDON MONTOUR

DEFENSEMAN

62

RIGHT

6-0 | 199

BRANTFORD, ONTARIO

ABOUT BRANDON: Montour signed as a free agent with the Kraken this July, fresh off a 2024 Stanley Cup win. An offensively-minded defender who is nonetheless top-pair ranking as a defender too, "Monty" is a player who can contribute in all three zones and play big minutes in all situations. He has been leading the Kraken in time on ice all season. At season's quarter-mark, Montour was on track for career highs in goals and assists.

The 30-year-old has reached the 30 point-plateau in each of the seven full NHL seasons that he has played that were not shortened due to COVID-19. As a testament to his endurance, he logged 57:56 of ice time in Game 1 of the Eastern Conference Finals against the Carolina Hurricanes, which lasted four overtimes. Montour set a Florida franchise record and is the ninth-highest total in NHL playoff history since the league began tracking time on ice in 1997-98. Montour was drafted by Anaheim in 2014 (second round), traded to Buffalo in 2019, then again to Florida in 2021, where he broke out as a high-scoring defenseman (16 goals and 57 assists for 73 points in the 2022-23 season) and vital part of a Stanley Cup-winning team last spring.

FUN FACT: Montour is of Mohawk descent from the Six Nations of the Grand River. He grew up in Ohsweken, a village inside Six Nations, where over 20,000 people showed up for Montour's day with the Cup this past July.

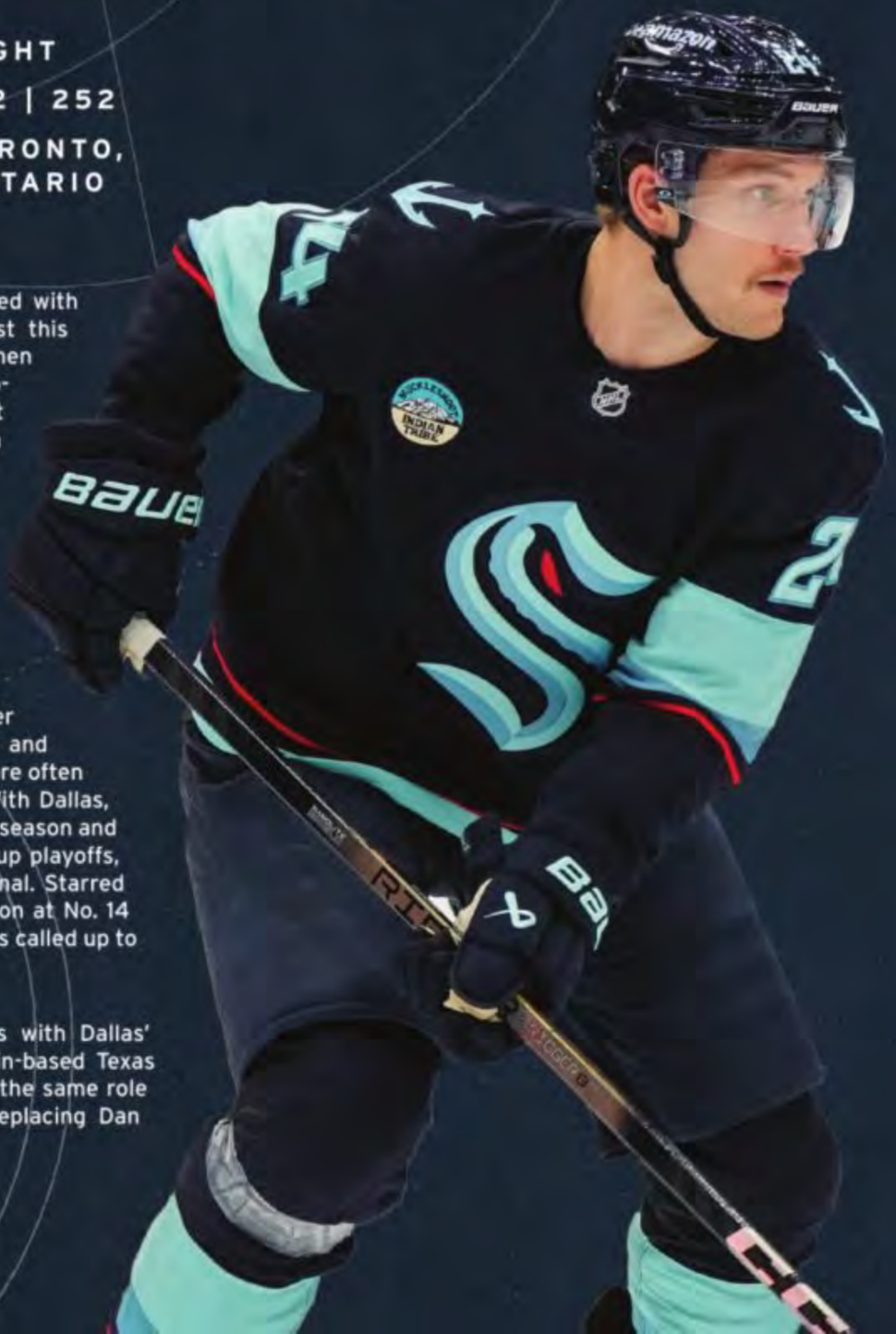
62
BAUER
WARRIOR
62

JAMIE OLEKSIAK

DEFENSEMAN

24

RIGHT
6-2 | 252
TORONTO, ONTARIO



ABOUT JAMIE: The veteran D-man has paired with Brandon Montour and Josh Mahura the most this season. Jamie has delivered and then some when signed to be a reliable, physical, consistent top-four defenseman. His 2021 free-agent contract counted as the Kraken's expansion pick from Dallas. With ex-Kraken defenseman Justin Schultz was out with a midseason injury in 2022-23, he and Will Borgen proved such an effective pair that the tandem was a lineup staple for the last one and a half seasons before new coach Dan Bylsma paired Borgen with young, up-and-coming defenseman Ryker Evans. Oleksiak set career bests in goals (nine), assists (16), and points (25) in 2022-23 and turned in another solid output (2 G, 13 A) last season when he and Borgen were required to be a shutdown pair more often due to a longer-time injury for Vince Dunn. With Dallas, he had two different runs sandwiched around a season and a half with Pittsburgh. In the 2020 Stanley Cup playoffs, he helped the Stars reach the Stanley Cup Final. Starred for NCAA Northeastern, prompting his selection at No. 14 overall first round of the 2011 NHL Draft. He was called up to make his NHL debut with the Stars in 2013.

FUN FACT: Jamie played three full seasons with Dallas' American Hockey League affilitate, the Austin-based Texas Stars playing for head coach Derek Laxdal, in the same role leading the Coachella Valley Firebirds and replacing Dan Bylsma.

24
BAUER
BAUER

47° 37' 19"N 122° 21' 14"W

JADEN SCHWARTZ

FORWARD

17

LEFT

5-10 | 185

WILCOX, SASKATCHEWAN

ABOUT JADEN: One of the first free agents signed by the Kraken when they inked a contract on July 1, 2021, pulling him westward from St. Louis, where he led the Blues in playoff goals during a Stanley Cup championship postseason in 2019. After an injury-plagued year during the inaugural season, the 2010 first-round pick rebounded with a 21-goal 2022-23 season plus five goals and five assists in the 2023 playoffs to rank third among Kraken scorers in what was a balanced attack. Last season, he finished with 13 goals and 17 assists in 62 games, missing 16 continuous games between late November and mid-January due to an upper-body injury.

Jaden appears to be a quiet leader if you only consider his media interviews, but teammates rave about his sense of humor and highly respect what he has to say in the locker room, especially before games and during intermissions. Coach Dan Bylsma and several players pointed to Schwartz ramping up his leadership when captain Jordan Eberle was out long-term. Schwartz' net-front frequency and in-the-corners toughness do not go unappreciated by his coaches. Fans watching him closely will see he frequently makes the initial play to get the puck to teammates who pick up the assists and goal credits.

FUN FACT: Schwartz had two hat tricks in that Cup-winning St. Louis postseason run. Family matter: Schwartz's brother played on hockey travel teams with teammate Jordan Eberle's brother. Both players are Saskatchewan natives, as is new teammate and summer free-agent signee Chandler Stephenson.

17
BAUER
17

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DANIEL SPRONG

FORWARD

91

RIGHT

6-1 | 195

AMSTERDAM, NETHERLANDS

ABOUT DANIEL: On Nov. 8, the Kraken reacquired Sprong from the Vancouver Canucks in exchange for future considerations. At the time, GM Ron Francis was making a move to bolster depth scoring for the the Kraken, but it turned out to be a genius move just days later when captain Jordan Eberle was sidelined with a pelvis injury and surgery that would require at least three months to return to the lineup. He has proved a welcome addition on the power play, too, and scored in his third game back with the club. Kraken goalie Joey Daccord is on the record as saying Sprong is the toughest pure shooter he has faced in any Kraken practice.

In 2022-23, his lone full season with the Kraken, Sprong notched 21 goals and 25 assists for 46 points. Those totals from Sprong came while playing just 11:25 per game, the team's 20th-highest total. Following the 2022-23 season, Sprong became a free agent and signed a one-year deal with the Detroit Red Wings before signing another one-year deal with the Vancouver Canucks last summer.

FUN FACT: "Spronger" was born in the Netherlands but his parents moved to Canada to further the potential of their son's hockey career. Sprong went on to become an elite scorer in the Quebec Maritime Junior Hockey League and, later, the American Hockey League. Sprong appeared in 42 NHL games for Pittsburgh before eventually being traded to Anaheim at the 2019 trade deadline.

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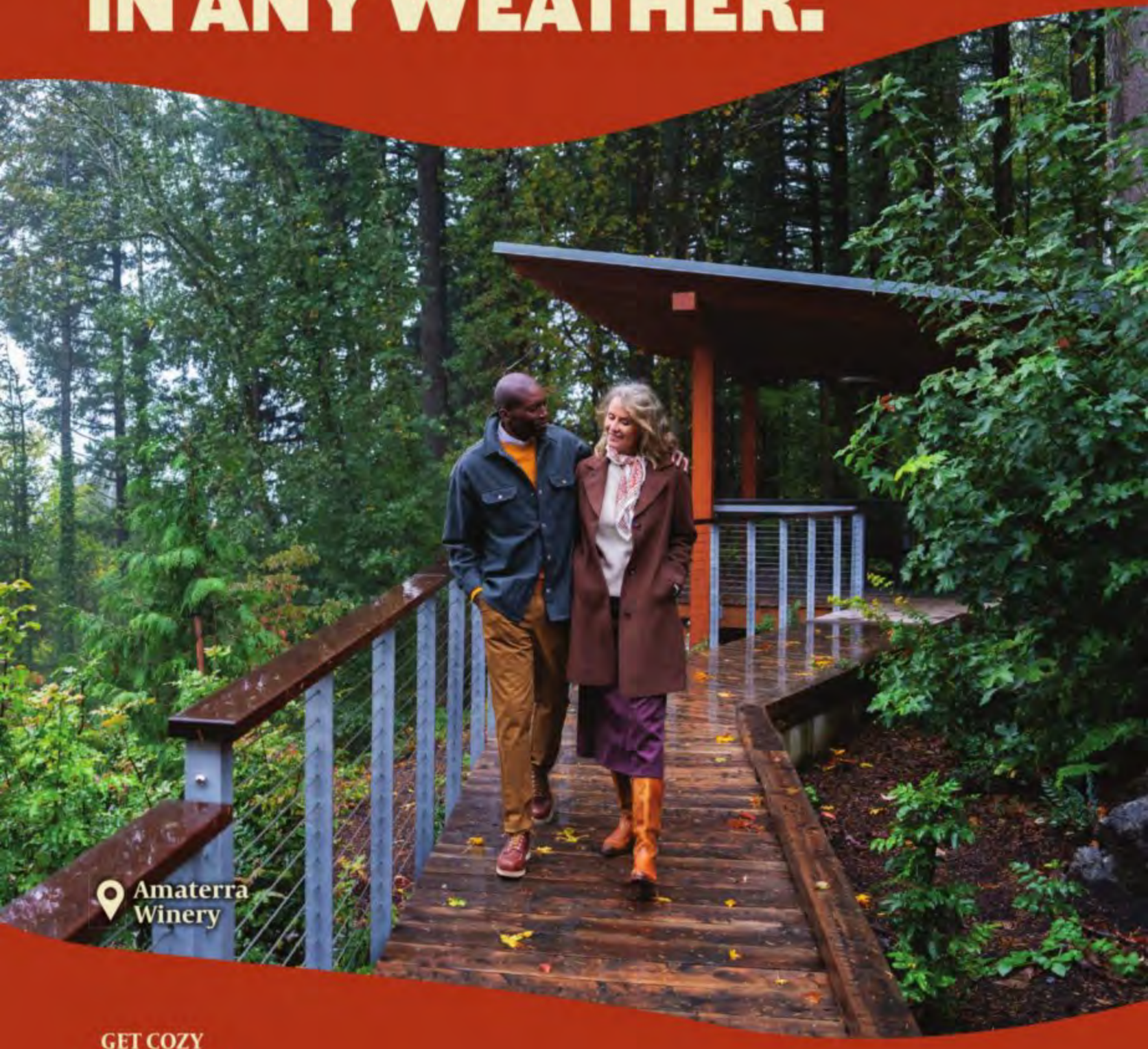

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MITCHELL STEPHENS

FORWARD

67

RIGHT

6-0 | 203

PETERBOROUGH, ONTARIO

ABOUT MITCHELL: Signed with the Kraken on the first day of NHL free agency this past summer, agreeing to a two-year, two-way contract ($775,000 AAV). The 27-year-old split the 2023-24 season between the Montreal Canadiens and AHL affiliate, the Laval Rocket. As an alternate captain in the AHL, he played 49 games, notching 13 goals and 22 assists. In the 23 contests with the Canadiens last season, Mitchell scored two goals and added an assist. The good-sized center is NHL-tested, appearing in 95 career games with Tampa Bay (2019-20 and 2020-21), Detroit (2021-22) and Montreal (2023-24).

He has played in seven postseason games with the Lightning, including being part of a winning Stanley Cup squad with then-and-now teammate Yanni Gourde in 2020. Mitchell has played 252 career AHL games over eight seasons with the Syracuse Crunch and Laval, notching 70 goals and 90 assists. He was an AHL All-Star in 2017-18 and a two-time Team Canada member for the 2016 and 2107 World Junior championships. Stephens was drafted by Tampa Bay in the second round (33rd overall) of the 2015 NHL Draft.

FUN FACT: Stephens and Philadelphia Flyers forward Owen Tippett are cousins. They both attended the former Premier Elite Athletes' Collegiate (PEAC), a sports school in the Toronto area. Tippett was younger than his cousin but nonetheless practiced with him and Edmonton superstar-to-be Connor McDavid.

THE CLIMATE PLEDGE
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CHANDLER STEPHENSON

FORWARD

9

LEFT

6-0 | 201

SASKATOON, SASKATCHEWAN

ABOUT CHANDLER: Chandler Stephenson is a two-time Stanley Cup winner who comes to Seattle as a free agent after signing a seven-year contract with the Kraken in July. As a strong two-way center, Stephenson provides stability in the middle of the ice, both offensively and defensively. In 75 regular season games last year, he scored 16 goals and had 35 assists to mark the third consecutive season he had 15-plus goals and 50-plus points. Kraken coach Dan Bylsma routinely references Stephenson as possessing one of the highlest hockey IQs on the Seattle roster.

He leaves Vegas as their sixth all-time scorer with 237 points total (75-162-237). Prior to playing in Vegas, as a member of the Capitals, Stephenson became the first rookie in Washington franchise history to score a playoff shorthanded goal when he did so on April 23, 2018, against the Columbus Blue Jackets. He also finished the 2018-19 season without taking a single penalty, setting a Washington franchise record for games played in a season without being assessed a penalty. He is one of 11 players (and one of 13 instances) in NHL history to play in at least 64 games in a season without being assessed a penalty.

FUN FACT: Stephenson is just the third player in NHL history to win a Cup with a team that he had previously defeated in a Cup Finals, joining Scott Niedermayer (with New Jersey in 2003 and Anaheim in 2007) and Billy Carroll (with the NY Islanders in 1983 and Edmonton in 1985) according to NHL Stats.

9
BAUER
9
BAUER

47° 37' 19"N 122° 21' 14"W

BRANDON TANEV

FORWARD

13

LEFT

6-0 | 189

TORONTO, ONTARIO

ABOUT BRANDON: A Seattle fan-favorite from Day 1 of the inaugural season, the player teammates call "Turbo" for his high motor, is enjoying a bounce-back season of sorts. He played 66 games in 2023-24 after hitting the full 82-game mark in the 2022-23 regular season. During the playoff year, he reached 35 points (16 goals, 19 assists, both personal bests) but took a bit of a dip last season (8 G, 9 A). Selected from Pittsburgh in the 2021 expansion draft, he got off to a hot start with the Kraken, scoring nine goals in the first 30 games (24-goal pace) but would injure his knee (after falling awkwardly from a hit) and miss the last 50 games of the season.

The 2022-23 season clearly proved his knee is NHL-ready and along with center Yanni Gourde and winger Tye Kartye, he was key part of a line deemed best and most consistent over the the first quarter of the Kraken season. He's a highly reliable penalty-killer who can also generate short-handed scoring chances, and in all cases, he's hard to ignore when on the ice every shift and even warmups.

FUN FACT: Cut from his minor hockey team at 15 for being undersized, Turbo took a year off of hockey to play soccer and run track before a growth spurt brought him back to the ice. "Turbo" scored the game-winning goal for Providence to win the 2015 NCAA title game. At last spring's Men's Worlds, he notched four goals for Team Canada.

13
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EELI TOLVANEN

FORWARD

20

LEFT
5-10 | 182
VIHTI, FI

ABOUT EELI: The 25-year-old signed a two-year, $6.95 million contract extension ($3.475 AAV) with the Kraken this summer as a restricted free agent. Most Seattle fans - and forlorn Nashville faithful - know the Kraken claimed Eeli ("EH-lee) on waivers in December 2022. The former first-round draft pick was selected by the Predators at No. 30 overall in the 2017 NHL Draft. Once put in the Seattle lineup on Jan. 1, 2023 (scoring a goal), Tolvanen has been a regular ever since. He celebrated a full calendar year as a Kraken mainstay in the 2024 NHL Winter Classic, posting the first goal to deafening cheers from the crowd of 47,000-plus in the 3-0 shutout.

"Tolvy" is on pace this season to hit the 20-goal and surpass the career-high 16 goals he has reached the last two hockey years. He logged 32 goals and 36 assists in 129 games with the team over the 2022-23 and 2023-24 seasons. Eeli has earned significant time on the power play with his elite one-timer shot, prompting D-man Vince Dunn to urge his then-new teammate to "shoot the puck every time I pass it to you."

FUN FACT: Notched a hat trick in his first Kontinental Hockey League game and was voted to the KHL All-Star Game, all as an 18-year-old. On a Seattle squad with mostly less experienced golfers among European players, Tolvy stands out on the tees and greens.

20
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RYAN WINTERTON

FORWARD

26

RIGHT

6-2 | 193

MARKHAM, ONTARIO

ABOUT RYAN: He was the Kraken's third-round selection (No. 67 overall) from the 2021 Draft who made his pro debut last season in a big way. In his first season in the AHL, he scored 22 goals and 13 assists across 58 regular season games and earned his way to his first call-up to the NHL. The 21-year-old made his debut on Nov. 9 versus Colorado and would go on to play nine total games with the Kraken across two call-ups. A right-handed center who has played wing in his NHL stints, Winterton was also a big part of Coachella's second straight push to the Calder Cup Final. In 18 games, he scored seven goals and 12 total points, including two goals in the final game against Hershey. Prior to playing in the AHL, Winterton persevered through COVID-19 postponements and recovery from a shoulder injury to score seven goals and 11 points in his first 12 games back with the Hamilton Bulldogs and ultimately help push his team to a Memorial Cup Final appearance.

FUN FACT: Ryan notched his first-ever NHL point Dec. 3 this season, earning a primary assist on a Brandon Tanev insurance in an impressive 4-2 road win at Carolina. Tanev made a point to ask the on-officials for the puck so he could make sure Winterton got the momento.

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SHANE WRIGHT

FORWARD

51

RIGHT

5-11 | 190

REGINA, SASKATCHEWAN

ABOUT SHANE: By most all accounts, at 19 years old, Shane was Coachella Valley's best player during the Calder Cup Final last spring, returning from injury and impacting the team and series in all zones. The 2022 first-rounder (4th overall) scored four goals and added an assist in a five-game early April NHL call-up. This fall, in his first press meet-up, GM Ron Francis said sports performance consultant Gary Roberts told his fellow long-career NHLer that he would see a different, bigger Wright at training camp (where he impressed all coaches and teammates). Francis has never wavered from saying Shane will be a big part of the Kraken franchise for years to come. This season is looking like it will be the start of reaching that projection.

The 2023-24 numbers at the AHL level? Outstanding, most especially for a 19-year-old playing in a league heavily populated by men and few teens: 22 goals and 25 assists for 47 points in 58 games, 13 points (4 G, 9 A) in 12 playoff games, returning from injury to play all six Calder Cup Final games. He notched three assists in a 5-4 Game 6 overtime loss, two set up linemate Ryan Winterton and third was a primary assist on Cale Fleury that tied the game with three minutes left in regulation.

FUN FACT: Wright and Winterton were called up together in November to anchor an all-rookie line with Tye Kartye. Wright and Winterton worked out together this past summer with Kraken sports performance consultant Gary Roberts.

51
WARRIOR
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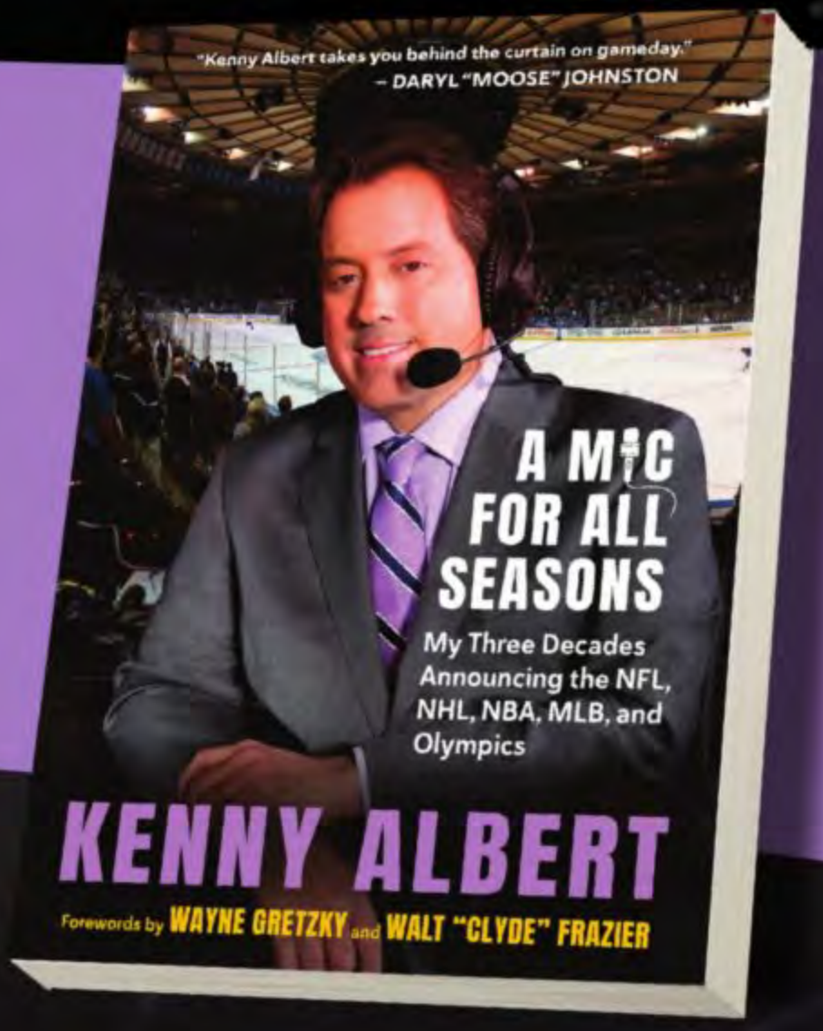
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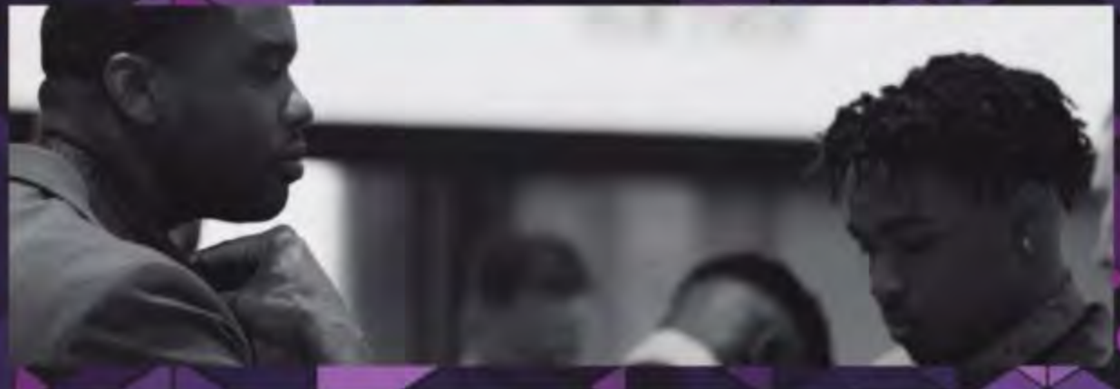

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2021 DRAFT CLASS

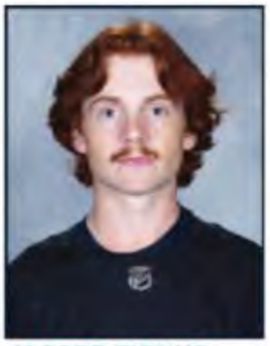
VILLE OTTAVAINEN
Defense
Fourth Round (99th overall)
2024-25: AHL Coachella Valley

JACOB MELANSON
Forward
Fifth Round (131st overall)
2024-25: AHL Coachella Valley

SEMYON VYAZOVOY
Goalie
Sixth Round (163rd overall)
2024-25: KHL
Salavat Yulayev

JUSTIN JANICKE
Forward
Seventh Round (195th overall)
2024-25: NCAA
Notre Dame

2022 DRAFT CLASS



JAGGER FIRKUS
Forward
Second Round (35th overall)
2024-25: AHL Coachella Valley

JANI NYMAN
Forward
Second Round (49th overall)
2024-25: AHL Coachella Valley

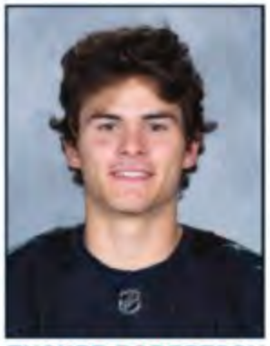
NIKLAS KOKKO
Goalie
Second Round (58th overall)
2024-25: AHL Coachella Valley

DAVID GOYETTE
Forward
Second Round (61st overall)
2024-25: AHL Coachella Valley

TY NELSON
Defense
Third Round (68th overall)
2024-25: AHL Coachella Valley

BEN MACDONALD
Forward
Third Round (91st overall)
2024-25: NCAA Harvard

TYSON JUGNAUTH
Defense
Fourth Round (100th overall)
2024-25: WHL Portland



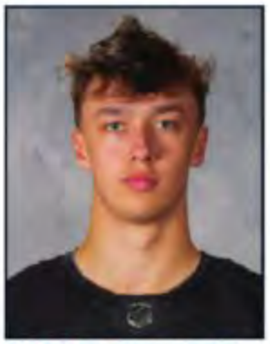
TUCKER ROBERTSON
Forward
Fourth Round (123rd overall)
2024-25: AHL Coachella Valley

BARRETT HALL
Forward
Sixth Round (164th overall)
2024-25: NCAA
St. Cloud State

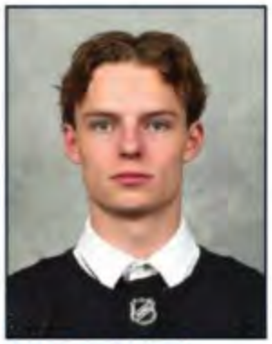
IN THE SYSTEM

2023 DRAFT CLASS

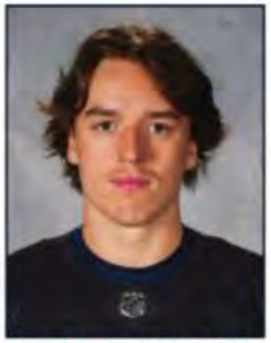
EDUARD SALE
Right Wing
First Round (20th overall)
2024-25 AHL Coachella Valley



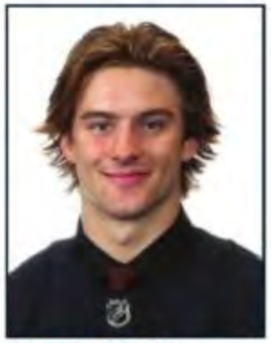
CARSON REHKOPF
Center
Second Round (50th overall)
2024-25: OHL Brampton



OSCAR FISKER MOLGAARD
Center
Second Round (52nd overall)
2024-25: HV71 Jonkoping SWE



LUKAS DRAGICEVIC
Defense
Second Round (57th overall)
2024-25: WHL Prince Albert



CADEN PRICE
Defense
Third Round (84th overall)
2024-25: WHL Lethbridge

ANDREI LOSHKO
Center
Fourth Round (116th overall)
2024-25: OHL Niagara

KADEN HAMMELL
Defense
Fifth Round (148th overall)
2024-25: WHL Everett

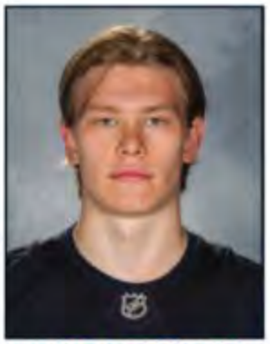
VISA VEDENPAA
Goalie
Sixth Round (168th overall)
2024-25: Mestis
Hermes Kokkola FIN

ZEB FORSFJALL
Center
Sixth Round (180th overall)
2024-25: SHL
Skelleftea AIK SWE

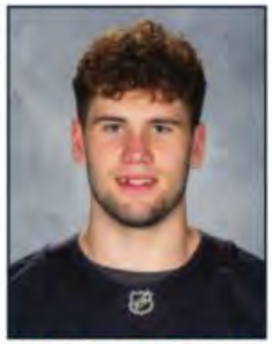
ZACCHARYA WISDOM
Right Wing
Seventh Round (212th overall)
2024-25: NCAA
Colorado College

2024 DRAFT CLASS

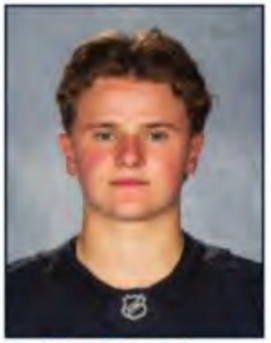
BERKLY CATTON
Center
First Round (8th overall)
2024-25 WHL Spokane



JULIUS MIETTINEN
Center
Second Round (40th overall)
2024-25 WHL Everett



NATHAN VILLENEUVE
Center
Second Round (63rd overall)
2024-25 OHL Sudbury



ALEX BERNIER
Defense
Third Round (73rd overall)
2024-25 QMJHL
Baie-Comeau Drakkar

KIM SAARINEN
Goalie
Third Round (88th overall)
2024-25 HPK FIN

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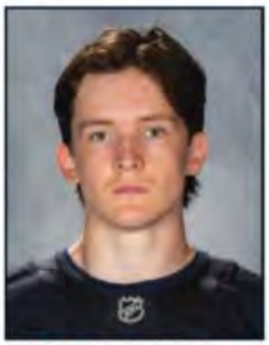
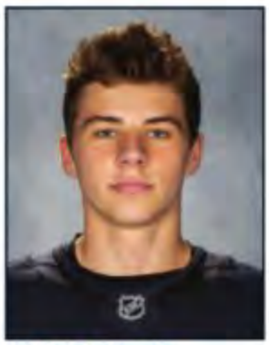
2024 DRAFT CLASS (CONT.)

OLIVER JOSEPHSON
Center
Fourth Round (105th overall)
2024-25 WHL Red Deer



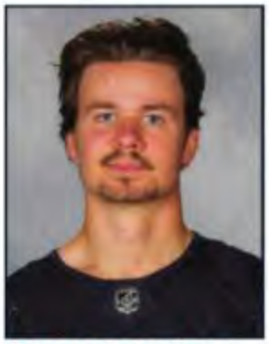
CLARK CASWELL
Forward
Fifth Round (141st overall)
2024-25 WHL Swift Current



JAKUB FIBIGR
Defense
Seventh Round (202nd overall)
OHL Mississauga

ENTRY LEVEL FREE AGENTS

LUKE HENMAN
Forward
Signed on May 12, 2021
2024-25 AHL Coachella Valley



LOGAN MORRISON
Center
Signed April 11, 2023
2024-25 AHL Coachella Valley

LLEYTON ROED
Left Wing
Signed March 27, 2024
2024-25 AHL Coachella Valley

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FIREBIRDS EXECS/COACHES

TROY BODIE

VP, HOCKEY AND BUSINESS OPERATIONS

About Troy: Troy joined American Hockey League affiliate Coachella Valley Firebirds in June 2021, focusing on hockey operations to Francis and business matters to help establish the Firebirds in the AHL and the community. The 2022-23 inaugural season certainly established both, with capacity crowds in attendance for the Firebirds' Western Conference championship series and within one overtime Game 7 goal from winning the league's Calder Cup. He concurrently served in a player development role with the Kraken, working with the 2021 Seattle draft class through travel and 1-on-1 phone calls.

Bodie was drafted by the Edmonton Oilers in the ninth round of the 2003 draft. He played nine years of professional hockey, including 159 NHL games with Anaheim, Carolina and Toronto. Troy is certainly familiar with AHL play: He appeared in 381 games (56 goals, 54 assists) with eight different AHL franchises over 10 seasons while also getting call-ups to the NHL.

Fun Fact: Troy and his Western Hockey League Kelowna Rockets won the coveted elite juniors Memorial Cup in 2004, the first-ever for the storied franchise.

DEREK LAXDAL

HEAD COACH

About Derek: "Lax" is in his 20th year as a head coach with junior teams in the Western Hockey League and Ontario Hockey League plus pro hockey stops in the Central Hockey League, ECHL and AHL. His playing days as a right wing started at 16 years old in the WHL in 1982 and spanned through the 2000-01 season, including 67 NHL games with Toronto and the New York Islanders, hundreds more AHL games and five seasons playing abroad in Great Britain.

In the important move of replacing Dan Bylsma as CVF head coach, what stood out was Laxdal's work with the Dallas Stars organization from 2014 to 2022. He served first as head coach of the AHL Texas Stars and then three seasons as an assistant coach with the NHL club. In 2018, Laxdal led the Austin-based Texas Stars to the Calder Cup Final, falling just short in seven games. During the 2020 pandemic-induced NHL bubble, Laxdal was part of Dallas reaching the Stanley Cup Final.

Fun Fact: There are many elite NHLers who played for Laxdal's AHL teams, including Kraken stalwart defenseman, Jamie Oleksiak.

BRENNAN SONNE

ASSISTANT COACH

About Brennan: To fill out the coaching role formerly held by Kraken assistant coach Jessica Campbell, Sonne joins the CVF staff from his head coach position with the Western Hockey League (WHL) Saskatoon Blades. Last season, his team notched a 105-point (50-13-5) record in 2023-24 (tops in the WHL) and marked the first time Saskatoon totaled more than 100 points (48-15-5) in consecutive seasons. He is highly regarded for his player development and building relationship skills.

Sonne was named the 2023-24 East Division finalist for the WHL Coach of the Year for the second consecutive year after winning the award in 2022-23. His three-season record with the Blades was of 136-54-14, including three consecutive WHL playoff runs and two Eastern Conference Final appearances. He spent six seasons as a WHL assistant with Saskatoon and Everett. As a player, Sonne appeared in 149 WHL games with Everett, Red Deer and Edmonton plus 65 games for the University of British Columbia.

Fun Fact: Brennan served four years as head coach for Ducs d'Angers in the Sybergiace Ligue Magnus, the top hockey league in France.

STU BICKEL

ASSISTANT COACH

About Stu: Bickel joined the Firebirds coaching staff for the highly successful 2022-23 inaugural season after serving as the assistant coach for the AHL's Springfield Thunderbirds for the 2021-2022 hockey year. Bickel previously served as head coach and assistant general manager for the Minnesota Magicians in the North American Hockey League.

A native of Minnesota, Bickel worked as an assistant coach at alma mater University of Minnesota from 2018 to 2020. As an undrafted free agent signed by Anaheim in 2008, Bickel appeared in 76 NHL games from 2011 to 2015 for the New York Rangers and Minnesota Wild. The defenseman/winger played for six different AHL franchises over 10 AHL seasons and 310 games. He works with Firebirds defensive corps and penalty-kill units among other duties.

Fun Fact: Stu certainly knows about the various levels of hockey that AHL players have experienced. He skated in the NHL, AHL and ECHL pro levels, plus NCAA Division I, the USHL, North American Hockey League as an amateur.

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SUN	MON	TUE	WED	THURS	FRI	SAT
		1	2	3	4	5
6	7	8	9	10	11 BAK 7PM	12
13	14	15	16 CGY 7PM	17	18 SD 7PM	19
20	21	22	23	24	25 ONT 7PM	26
27	28	29	30 SJ 7PM	31		

NOVEMBER 2024

SUN	MON	TUE	WED	THURS	FRI	SAT
					1 BAK 7PM	2 BAK 7PM
3	4	5 COL 6:05PM	6 COL 6:05PM	7	8 ONT 7PM	9
10 ONT 3PM	11	12	13	14	15 ABB 7PM	16 ABB 4PM
17	18	19	20 COL 7PM	21	22 SD 7PM	23
24	25	26 TUC 6:30PM	27 TUC 6:30PM	28	29	30 TEX 6PM

DECEMBER 2024

SUN	MON	TUE	WED	THURS	FRI	SAT
1	2	3 HSK 7PM	4	5 TEX 7PM	6	7 SJ 6PM
8 SJ 3PM	9	10	11	12 SJ 7PM	13	14 CGY 6PM
15 CGY 3PM	16	17	18 SJ 7PM	19	20 ONT 7PM	21 ONT 6PM
22	23	24	25	26	27 BAK 7PM	28 ONT 6PM
29	30	31 COL 5PM				

JANUARY 2025

SUN	MON	TUE	WED	THURS	FRI	SAT
			1	2	3	4 ONT 6PM
SD 5PM	6	7	8 TUC 7PM	9	10	11 CHI 6PM
CHI 3PM	13	14	15	16 HSK 7PM	17	18 COL 6:05PM
COL 2:05PM	20	21	22 SJ 7PM	23	24	25 ONT 6PM
BAK 5PM	27	28	29 ABB 7PM	30	31 TEX 5PM	

FEBRUARY 2025

SUN	MON	TUE	WED	THURS	FRI	SAT
						1 TEX 5PM
2	3 2025 AHL ALL-STARS	4	5	6	7 SD 7PM	8
9	10	11	12 HSK 7PM	13	14	15 SD 6PM
16 BAK 5PM	17	18	19 TUC 7PM	20	21	22 6PM
23 SJ 3PM	24	25	26 HSK 7PM	27	28 SD 7PM	

MARCH 2025

SUN	MON	TUE	WED	THURS	FRI	SAT
						1
2	3	4 CGY 6PM	5 CGY 6PM	6	7	8
9	10	11	12 COL 7PM	13	14 BAK 7PM	15 HSK 6PM
16	17	18	19 HSK 7PM	20	21 CGY 6PM	22
23 CGY 1PM 30 CHI 1PM	24/31	25	26	27	28	29 CHI 5PM

APRIL 2025

SUN	MON	TUE	WED	THURS	FRI	SAT
		1	2 COL 7PM	3	4 HSK 7PM	5 HSK 6PM
6	7	8	9 SJ 7PM	10	11	12 BAK 6PM
13 SD 5PM	14	15	16	17	18 ABB 7PM	19 SD 6PM
20	21	22	23	24	25	26
27	28	29	30			

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BY BOB CONDOR

(story continues on page 128)

Even before his American Hockey League Coachella Valley Firebirds swept a two-game road series against the Abbotsford Canucks in November, head coach Derek Laxdal smiled when asked if he is still having fun. For context, he is in his 20th year as a head coach with junior teams in the Western Hockey League and Ontario Hockey League plus pro hockey stops in the Central Hockey League, ECHL and AHL. His playing days as a right wing started at 16 years old in the WHL in 1982 and spanned through the 2000-01 season, including 67 NHL games with Toronto and the New York Islanders, hundreds more AHL games, and five seasons playing abroad in Great Britain.

That's four decades of shifts, games, practices and rinks. Yet Laxdal was beaming in a service corridor at Abbotsford Centre after a morning skate. These days, his hockey life includes frequent individual film sessions with every player on the roster.

"That's the exciting part," said Laxdal, "The growth you get to see every day you come to the rink and you work with players, you're working with veterans, you're working with young rookies, you're working with second-year players. For me, it's all about the teaching and seeing the rewards and the results of the games, but most of all seeing players grow."

DECIDING ON LAXDAL

The player improvement, of course, is exactly why Kraken GM Ron Francis and the hockey operations group conducted a deep search for Dan Bylsma's successor at Coachella Valley. What stood out was Laxdal's work with the Dallas Stars organization from 2014 to 2022. He served first as head coach of the AHL Texas Stars and then three seasons as an assistant coach with the NHL club. In 2018, Laxdal led the Austin-based Texas Stars to the Calder Cup Final, losing in seven games to the Toronto Marlies. In the 2020 pandemic-induced NHL bubble, Laxdal was part of Dallas reaching the Stanley Cup Final.

Some elite NHL players on Laxdal's AHL teams include such Dallas standouts as forwards Roope Hintz and Jason Robertson, defenseman Esa Lindell and goaltender Jake Oettinger, along with another young defenseman-now- Kraken-stalwart, Jamie Oleksiak.

"I put as much emphasis on our veterans as with the young players," said Laxdal. "I'll sit down with Ben Meyers, sit down with John Hayden and [captain] Max McCormick. We'll go over the video. We'll go over shifts. If I see something that can help a player improve and help a player get to the level that he wants to play, that's the rewarding part for me."

"I love the development level. Obviously, I love being in the NHL too. But this is the next best thing, working with players who are going to be in the next Seattle Kraken lineups. Any time you see a player get called up or graduate to the National Hockey League, it's not only rewarding as a head coach but for your staff. Everybody plays a part."

GETTING THE PLAYERS' PERSPECTIVE

One of the top prospects at Coachella Valley, 2022 second-rounder Jagger Firkus, confirmed his head coach's diligence.

"He's open-door," said Firkus. "He's giving you feedback every single day, which is super important for a younger guy. He makes sure you know what you need to do and improve on it.'

Hayden, a veteran who has played for nine different coaches across five NHL teams and two AHL franchises, concurs: "Before our last game [a 4-2 home win over Ontario Nov. 10], he pulled me out of the locker to do some video from the game before, just to go over some clips, nuances of the game, even small details that could possibly help the team win if we're on the same page."

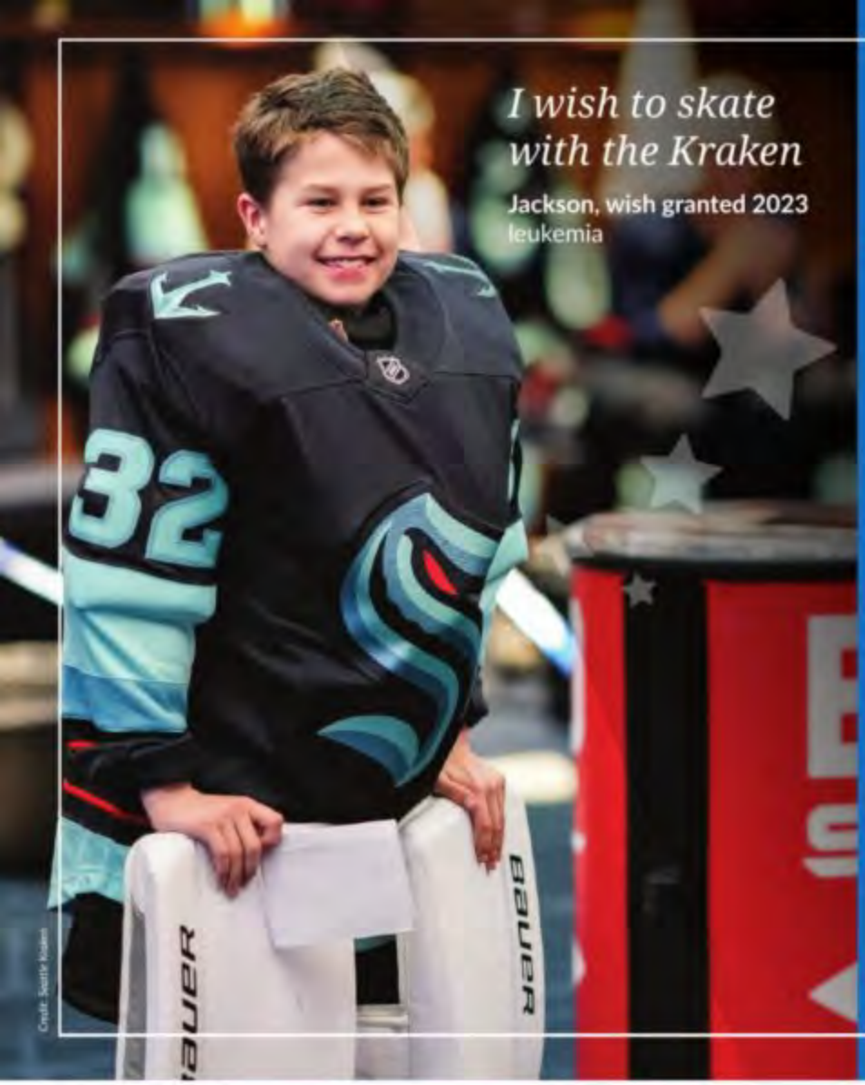
So, nine different coaches ... What's Hayden's take on his newest leader?

"It's been great," said Hayden. "Lax has the confidence to implement some of his own dynamics and also the humility to understand that a team that went to the finals twice in a row, a lot of stuff has probably worked well already. He balances that, and he emphasizes team dynamics and family. He's big on us playing for each other."

BONDING ON THE ROAD

The togetherness dynamic appears to be working. Observing the team at the rink and hotel over the November sweep weekend, the veterans are clearly making time to support and befriend younger teammates no matter which players are most likely bound for NHL games.

Hayden, a big part of the two Western Conference championship teams in CVF's first two AHL seasons, likes what he sees – a lot: "What's promising is the winning record despite injuries and new faces. It shows that we're capable of. I think this could be another Firebirds team that goes on a deep run. It's a pretty cool combination of guys that have been in the organization and first- and second-year guys. These [young] guys are legit players. It's fun to play with them." ⚓



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HOLDING OPEN THE DOOR

JESSICA CAMPBELL EARNED HER WAY BEHIND AN NHL BENCH AS THE FIRST WOMAN TO SERVE FULL-TIME AS AN ASSISTANT COACH AND IS MAKING HISTORY IN THE PROCESS

BY ALISON LUKAN

Seattle's home opener in early October featured a lot of firsts: first Kraken games for coach Dan Bylsma and free agent signees Brandon Montour and Chandler Stephenson, first North American game of the new season. And when the puck dropped, Jessica Campbell became the first woman to work behind the bench full-time as an NHL assistant coach.

While that last first is a pretty big one, and Campbell had felt the moment building, once the game started, it was all about the work.

"For me, it was just a normal day in terms of my routine," Campbell said. "I never want to diminish the things I'm doing because I'm so focused on the task at hand. But I also know being focused on the task at hand has allowed me to get to this moment.

"But I think the moment leading up to the game and stepping on the bench...I'm really going to honor what it is. I definitely understand the magnitude of this moment. It is important for our game."

Campbell flashed a brief smile when her introduction to fans at Climate Pledge Arena drew loud cheers. But soon enough, Campbell was wholly engaged in the action on the ice. She shares responsibility for Kraken forwards with assistant coach Dave Lowry and for the power play with assistant Bob Woods.

"I've seen her evolve as a coach," goaltender Joey Daccord said. "My first year with her (in Coachella Valley) was also her first year. I think at the beginning, she felt it out a little bit ... Now she's much more assertive. She's really smart and the biggest thing is she and Dan are the same page, which allows them to be cohesive in their plan for our team."

While Campbell was all business behind the bench, she had a loud cheering section nearby. Campbell's aunt and uncle were there, plus Leo Parker – Campbell's first minor league hockey coach – and his wife, Sharon. Same for the Bulawka family, the first parents from Campbell's native Kelowna to hire Jessica as their two sons' skating coach which "kind of catapulted everything in terms of getting me here," said Campbell,

PROUD PARENTS, SIX TEAMMATES

Of course, mom, Monique, and dad, Gary were glued to their seats. They'd even come to practice the day before, Monique already proudly in her Kraken jersey.

"She got a really big cheer today that was really emotional and heartfelt and deserving," Monique said post-home opener. "I've seen her work really, really hard. She's put in a lot of time and energy studying the game and learning the game. It's been really exciting, and I respect her so much for all her work and her work ethic."

Also present for the historic moment: Six of her former teammates from college and Team Canada. Among them, Blayre Turnbull, Bailey Bram and Jill Saulnier, flew from all over North America to cheer on their friend.

"It's like every single emotion you can imagine," Turnbull said. "As her former teammates and, more importantly her friends, to see her achieve this moment and milestone ... to be here and see it live firsthand, we could not be more proud of Jess and what she's accomplished as a coach but [also] who she is as a person. I think that's why she's accomplished everything she has in her young life."

As the final buzzer sounded, while the Kraken didn't get the outcome they wanted on the ice, the moment wasn't lost on the team that has learned from Campbell out early for every practice and stays late to help any player.

"It's something that we've all been proud to be a part of," Vince Dunn said. "It certainly makes a statement around the world for all women, It's a special moment for her tonight."

ABOUT THAT MOMENT ...

Campbell says the impact of her milestones often hit her later in time. Seeing photos and hearing people's comments reinforces what her work means to others.

"I just know the young kids who are at their first hockey game, what they're going to know is there can be a female coach behind the bench," said Campbell. "It's really special for me. It fuels me every day.

"Hopefully somebody else will have a door held open for them versus having to push it open and find ways to unlock it. I look at the other women around me [in the Kraken organization] and other women in the industry doing their piece and doing a fantastic job of it. It's part of a movement. It's part of important change. Anytime you have different people in the room, you get different and good outcomes, you get unique outcomes. You get problems solved in a different ways. That's how you get ahead in life and in sport." ⚓

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JARED McCANN:

100, 200 and Counting

KRAKEN'S ALL-TIME LEADING SCORER HAD A BUSY SUMMER, INCLUDING A JOYFUL WEDDING, BUT HE STILL TRAINED AS HARD AS EVER

(story continues on page 138)

BY GEOFF BAKER

Kraken forward Jared McCann has always kept things close with the people he trusts the most. That includes long-time friend and former NHL forward, Joey Hishon, McCann's personal coach back home in Stratford, Ontario, Their work has paid off with McCann this season becoming the first player in franchise history to surpass the 100-goals and 200-points marks in a Seattle uniform.

His offseason last summer was special, especially memorable was his mother, Erin, living for decades with multiple sclerosis, walking him down the aisle at his wedding. His schedule included playing for Team Canada at the IIHF World Hockey Championship and a honeymoon in Italy. But make no mistake, the 28-year-old veteran still put in the time to improve in all areas of his game.

"I'm pretty hard on myself most of the time," McCann said. "No matter what I've done, I always feel like there's room for more. Like I could be doing it better."

Erin McCann said excuses are never an option for her son: "He can be really hard on himself. That's just the way he's wired."

TIME TO GET TO WORK

Not satisfied with a 2023-24 season that dipped to 29 goals after scoring 40 the previous year, the Kraken's all-time leading scorer decided last spring to hire Hishon, 33, a one-time Colorado Avalanche forward, also from Stratford, to tutor him in hockey's finer details. Hishon works for a company run by Hall of Famer Adam Oates that designs customized videos for players in isolated game situations. McCann pays for Oates Sports Group videos from his games while Hishon coaches him on improving what the footage shows.

"There were times I was making bad decisions with the puck," McCann said. "It's just about me learning patience. You don't always have to force a shot."

Hishon tutored on controlling pucks sooner to make more time to make the next play. Coach and student looked for McCann to capitalize on his reputation as a lethal shooter by getting opponents to freeze up in anticipation of a shot that doesn't always come.

"It can really create a lot of space for everyone else on the ice," Hishon said. "Because when he winds up, everyone else kind of flinches or folds. It gives his teammates more time."

MOTHER-SON BONDING

Few are closer to McCann than a mother first diagnosed with MS at age 18. Numbness in her limbs and a loss of balance gradually became more frequent. Erin, and her husband, Matt, adopted a son, Justin, from Guatemala because she was worried about childbirth issues. Later, discovering she could still bear children, she gave birth to a daughter, Jamie. Matt had a son, Jordan, from a prior marriage. When youngest Jared was born, his mother was caring for four children.

She left her job at a bank to work as a receptionist for her husband's construction and gravel business, figuring it easier to take time off if the children got sick. Once Jared was six weeks old – his siblings in school or daycare -- his mother brought him daily to the company's office.

"We spent a lot of time together without the other kids during the day," his mother said. "He'd come to work. Then I'd take him somewhere to keep him busy. That's why I think it was easier for us later on."

Erin introduced Jared to learn-to-skate lessons by age four, watching him cry through classes until big brother Justin began going with them. She drove Jared to practices and games when his dad couldn't. And helped him count the 1,000 pucks a week he shot against cinder block walls of an old horse manure bunker his father set up. But Mom never critiqued McCann's play or asked about games unless he brought it up.

McCann had several long talks with his mother earlier in his career, bouncing from Vancouver, which drafted him 24th overall in 2014 to Florida and Pittsburgh before the Kraken selected him in the July 2021 expansion draft. The rest is Kraken lore, with McCann scoring 27 goals that inaugural year and earning the team's first contract extension – a five-year, $25 million additional payout.

HIGHLIGHT OF THE SUMMER

McCann made time for the July 11 wedding to his girlfriend of six years, Valerie Vanderkuylen. The reception was outdoors at Graydon Hall Manor in Toronto, an 88-year-old venue surrounded by lush terraces and garden walls. The outdoor setting was tricky for his mother, who's lost most feeling on her right side and struggles with unfamiliar terrain. But father Matt, with Erin holding on tight to her son, walked their son down the aisle.

"To have my mom there was special with what she's been through in her life," McCann said. "I owe her a lot – almost everything. To be able to share that moment – and the first dance with her – it was awesome." ⚓

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CLOSE WATCH

THERE'S SO MUCH MORE TO THE NHL VIDEO ANALYSTS' JOBS DURING A GAME THAN MEETS THE EYES. GEOFF BAKER EMBEDDED WITH THE ANALYSTS TO REPORT ON THEIR DEEPER ROLES ON GAME NIGHTS

BY GEOFF BAKER

There's no sleeping at the monitors for Kraken video staffers Tim Ohashi and Brady Morgan after the opening faceoff. It takes mere seconds for video analyst Morgan to call out "Good entry!" over his headset to assistant coach Jessica Campbell on the Kraken bench and goalie coach Steve Briere in the overhead press bridge as a puck is carried over the visiting Chicago Blackhawks' blue line.

Not long after, Morgan says "That's yucky!" into the headset as a jumble of Chicago players enter the Kraken zone seemingly just ahead of the puck, flagging potential an offside that will be material if the Blackhawks were to score. But a Kraken defender quickly clears the puck out.

"Doesn't matter!" Morgan tells his headset audience. Morgan is seated alongside head analyst Ohashi at a coaching room table adjacent to the Kraken dressing room at Climate Pledge Arena, rendering blue-line opinions throughout the game. The duo stares at a bank of six television screens – two with "coach's camera" overhead angles, two from the Kraken Hockey Network (KHN) broadcast, another of the video scoreboard feed, plus a "hawkeye" screen in which eight different angles can be toggled through – along with additional laptops and tablets at their fingertips. They'll hit a keyboard stroke for an instant rewind if something at the blue line immediately doesn't look quite right.

Zone entries are critical. Other challenges are usually for goaltender interference and occasionally a missed play stoppage.

"If you're going to tell them to challenge a goal, you've got to be right," Morgan said. "If you're wrong, it's going to be a bad night."

CODING AND COLLABORATING

Ohashi, who spends most of the game live-coding video clips from the entirety of the game, won't hesitate to chime in if he has a better look. Watching the blue lines is just the beginning of what the pair will do. By night's end, they'll have cut 1,569 different clips and grouped them into specific buckets – faceoffs, shot attempts, blocked shots, zone entries and breakouts, forechecks and goalie saves among them. They'll deliver a portable hard drive of clips to each Kraken coach as they come into the coaching room between periods.

Morgan's headset links to Campbell and Briere are for more than suggesting challenges. He and Ohashi provide updates on things such as which player is winning faceoffs from a particular side or they help coaches review footage of plays missed in real-time. The coaches on the bench carry league-issued iPads to access clips Ohashi and Morgan send them.

As the horn sounds to end the first period, Ohashi and Morgan place portable drives at each coach's desk. Players trudge to locker stalls down the hall and the coaches enter the room, with head coach Dan Bylsma having a quick word about a video he'd like to see.

"With Dan, it's probably the most variable of any coach I've ever worked with," said Ohashi, who spent five seasons as a video analyst with his boyhood favorite Washington Capitals prior to joining the Kraken for seasons one. "With most coaches, I'd say the tendency is to watch scoring chances. With Dan, it's more about whatever area of the game he feels he needs."

Campbell uses her portable drive to study Kraken's performance during the period's lone power play, while assistant Bob Woods examines specific zone breakouts by defensemen. Briere views footage of goalie Joey Daccord.

Early second period, Jared McCann snaps a scoreless tie. "We've got a good goal!" Morgan shouts into his headset above the crowd's roar, indicating McCann was onside.

Overall, it's a lower-key night for Ohashi and Morgan than the previous week's road trip.

They got a goal overturned in Boston on a missed zone entry offside.

DELIVERING IN GAME 7 OF 2023 PLAYOFFS

The duo's greatest triumph occurred on the road in Denver two springs ago in Game 7 of the opening round of the 2023 Stanley Cup Playoffs. Superstar Nathan MacKinnon had just scored a tying third-period goal for Colorado but Ohashi and Morgan knew right away the initial zone entry was offside." We call that a 'tap-in,' " Morgan said.

The Ball Arena crowd's reaction was so loud Ohashi and Morgan couldn't tell whether the coaches had heard them over the headsets. As a backup, they sent a red-banner alert with the word "Offside" to a bench-side video monitor, leading to a negated goal. The 2-1 score stood as the Kraken clinched the series.

The prior game, they challenged a far closer offside called in their favor to eliminate an opening Game 6 goal by Colorado's Bowen Byram. They'd hastily reviewed several angles – all within the 20 to 30 seconds teams typically are allowed to challenge goals. With seconds left, they found supportive overhead footage. Challenge made, series won. ⚓

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'Shifting' Into High Gear

Today's 'Hockey 101- 201-301' lesson shows how line changes on the fly can transform a game

By Bob Condor

In an early season Kraken home game, fan-favorite Brandon Tanev tied the score at 2-2 en route to a 4-3 overtime thriller against Vegas. Tye Kartye got the assist. Fellow linemate Yanni Gourde said the "goal doesn't happen without Matty Beniers."

Funny thing: Beniers wasn't on the ice at the time. What gives Yanni? The alternate captain was happy to elaborate, noting Beniers made the right decisions all game about when to come off ice for a shift change. Gourde's answer provides a Hockey 101/201/301 lesson for all of us:

Let's Start With the 101 Level ...

Most fans know hockey is the only major team sport in which players can enter and depart the game flow while play is live. NHL players go all out on their shifts, a big reason why the ideal NHL shift is roughly 40 seconds.

When shifts go past a minute – even 50 to 55 seconds – the opposing coaches know there is potential to take advantage of tired players. Coach Dan Bylsma and his staff monitor shift length of opponents all game.

On to Gourde and a 201 Perspective ...

Gourde said all young NHLers face a learning curve in knowing when to head to the bench for a change: "It is a huge, huge thing in the NHL."

Gourde then explained why Beniers gets credit for Tanev's tying goal against Vegas, expanding on the concept of leaving the ice with the next shift being in a positive place.

"If you change with possession [in the offensive zone], you change the entirety of the next shift," said Gourde. "If you change without the puck, you most likely spend the first 20 seconds defending the puck and then you have just 20 seconds left. But if you are changing with the puck, then in the first 20 seconds you get the other team tired. It's a massive difference."

Going Next Level, 301, with Coaches Bylsma, Woods

Bylsma calls out the forward line shifts as a head coach. Assistant coach Bob Woods takes charge of the defensive pairs. Assistant coaches Dave Lowry and Jessica Campbell keep their eyes on opponent shifts, plus get involved with Kraken personnel during penalty kills (Lowry) and power plays (Woods and Campbell).

Not all linemates or defensive pairs go out at once. Woods said he pays particular attention to the best/safest times to swap the "weak-side" defenseman, the D-man farthest from the bench.

"With the forwards, the center goes out first for any one of the forwards coming off," said Bylsma. "He will be the freshest guy in the defensive zone if the play turns that way.

"Jess and Dave are keeping an eye on the other team's changes and they're helping myself and Bob with the changes we make."

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